

















THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
CITY SUPERINTENDENCY OF SCHOOLS  
IN THE UNITED STATES

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To

PROFESSOR JAMES COLLINS MILLER



## INTRODUCTION

"The right management of schools is one of the largest social problems with which this generation is struggling." So wrote Superintendent Tarbell of Providence, fifty years ago. His statement applies with equal truth and force to the present generation.

That some progress in the management of city schools has been made since the struggles in the years of beginnings recounted in this volume cannot be doubted. In the years of the twentieth century following the period covered by this study and influenced somewhat by the errors and achievements in the development of the city superintendency of schools in the nineteenth century, still further progress has been made in lifting city school administration out of the casual, empirical and political toward the unified, scientific and professional.

It is somewhat surprising and disconcerting, in the light of present day claims of achievements in city school administration, to find how old some of the present troublesome problems are and how similar are the problems of the city superintendent of schools in 1935 to those of his predecessor in 1845 or 1885. Too little value has been derived from the lessons of the past. Structures and practices tend to persist in the social order even into the day when such structures and practices are out of harmony with the new order and are no longer needed or desirable. Many a superintendent would have been saved from pitfalls and could have understood what to him was not understood in the attitudes and practices of some of the individuals and organizations of his city had he been familiar with the history of the schools of the earlier years.

Superintendents have had too meagre knowledge of the facts of the history of the schools under their supervision and of other cities due, in part, to the lack of adequate, accurate and impartial histories of these schools easily available in readable form. There are histories of these schools but most of them have been locally produced and often for



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the purpose of showing how good or how bad the schools are. There are other studies of particular movements in school administration and of particular sections of the country. This volume presents the facts from reliable sources and for thirty-nine of the larger cities well distributed to cover all sections of the United States. The Author has shown excellent judgment of relative values and has selected out of a great volume of materials those materials which contribute most to an accurate and useful history of the period studied. He has presented the data and interpretations of them in a form that will be found both interesting and stimulating.

While this volume is devoted to a study of the larger city school systems its findings are almost equally valid for the smaller cities and for rural school systems. What was done in the larger centers of population powerfully influenced the courses of action in the less populous areas.

Social progress is not along an even front. This has been well shown in the origin and development of the city superintendency of schools and in the achievements of the schools in the several cities. This unevenness is found not alone among city school systems as a whole but in any school where there are a few teachers—methods and materials a decade or a generation apart may be found on the two sides of the hall separating the classrooms. Bad practices discarded in good systems and classrooms will be found operating a half century later in other systems and classrooms. The schools of the country show peaks and highlands which long have been illuminated by the rays of progress while the canyons and lowlands are untouched by the light of the coming of the new day. The statement of the Boston sub-committee in 1847 on why the school superintendency should be established, sets forth the aims and purposes of such a service in terms as modern as though written three quarters of a century later. Intelligence and ignorance, self effacing service and selfishness have shared

in determining the devious course of the development of the superintendency of schools.

From the very beginnings there are many evidences that school superintendents set the educational above the business functions. Business was thought to hamper the superintendent in his real work. Boards of education were much more ready to place the educational affairs under the superintendent and were usually reluctant to if not actually opposed to giving the superintendent any authority in the business affairs. Duality of control was favored by some of the best superintendents—one control for business and another separate control for education. The conception that everything for which money is spent in school administration is for the education of the children and, consequently, that educational needs and processes must determine the business and the materials had little recognition in the nineteenth century and even yet lacks anything like full recognition. The movement for unitary control is still meeting the back-wash from these earlier years. Points of view and programs as well as men and their actions must be judged by the light available at the time they existed. It must also be kept in mind that early boards of education and school superintendents had no fore-runners to show them the way. They doubtless did the best they could. Some of them made valuable history for the profit of later years. All who are interested in the right management of the schools will find themselves indebted to the author of this book for his valuable and much needed contributions to the history of the origin and early development of the superintendency of city schools.

San Francisco  
January 1935.

Joseph Marr Gwinn



## FOREWORD

The purpose of the author is to present the facts concerning the city superintendency of schools in the United States during the nineteenth century as gleaned from a study of the office in the following cities: Los Angeles and San Francisco, California; Denver, Colorado; New Haven, Connecticut; Wilmington, Delaware; Washington, District of Columbia; Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; New Orleans, Louisiana; Baltimore, Maryland; Boston, Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts; Detroit, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Kansas City and St. Louis, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska; Jersey City and Newark, New Jersey; Brooklyn, Buffalo, New York and Rochester, New York; Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio; Portland, Oregon; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Providence, Rhode Island; Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee; Salt Lake City, Utah; Richmond, Virginia; Seattle, Washington; Milwaukee, Wisconsin. These cities were selected on the basis of the following criteria: population of one hundred thousand or more; historical importance; significant or unique educational characteristics; a representation of all states and sections of the nation possible. The data secured in the original records of the city councils and boards of education, with contemporary state statutes, periodicals, and newspapers, constituted the bulk of the material obtained, although secondary sources were given more than a cursory examination.

While, on the surface, a study of state statutes, city ordinances, and board of education rules and regulations may appear to offer a satisfactory solution of the problem, it has been deemed wise to approach it also through another avenue; namely, a study of the men who filled the office of city superintendent. This has been considered desirable for the reason that, while many forces contributed to the origin and growth of this office, the officeholder, in meeting and coping with these forces, figured largely in the

shaping of the superintendency. This phase of the study will also be of value in that it will make possible the projection of lines of progress into the future, not only in regard to the superintendency in the abstract, but also in regard to the men who accept the challenge. Whatever light may be thrown on this great body of American explorers, who "scorn delights, and live laborious days," will be considered worthwhile. The significance and expediency of securing such knowledge may be inferred from a consideration of Chapter I. It is noteworthy that we have least knowledge concerning that period in the history of education in the United States of which we probably have most need of knowledge; namely, the last half or three quarters of a century. The present investigation is intended as a mere beginning in the imperative study of this fascinating field.

The first step in the study was to make use of the resources of a number of libraries, especially those of Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania. When it became evident that the most important data were to be found in the cities involved, a letter was sent to the superintendent of schools in each city, requesting aid in the locating of original records and of other sources, both primary and secondary. The response was most encouraging. When the cities were visited the superintendents were instrumental in making data available, and to them, above all others, must go the credit for bringing to light the most valuable material contained herein. The author is greatly indebted, also, to the secretaries of the boards of education, the clerks of the city councils, the librarians of public and private libraries, and the newspapers, which opened their files for inspection. While the courtesy and assistance of these men in each city was a source of great helpfulness, it must nevertheless be stated that the study would neither have been started nor have approached the stage of consummation which it has, had it not been for the encouragement, advice, and service of a group of individuals, again too

numerous to mention, among whom the following were conspicuous: Dr. John Seiler Brubacher and Dr. Frank E. Spaulding, of Yale University; Dr. John H. Minnick and Dr. James Collins Miller, of the University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Edward H. Reisner, of Teachers College, Columbia University. The author tenders to them a sincere acknowledgment for their helpfulness; to them is due in large part such merit as the study may possess.

Finally, acknowledgment must be made to those who aided and encouraged in the more tedious processes involved in collecting the data and making possible the treatment accorded them. Chief among this group were Flora F. Jones and Frances Johnson.

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T. L. R.



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## CHAPTER I

THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE CITY SUPERINTENDENT  
OF SCHOOLS

Plutarch attributes to "Euripides or some other" the remark that "the first requisite of happiness is that a man be born in a great city."<sup>1</sup> Truly, this is the age of the city and, even more strikingly, the age of the large city. While great cities appeared in antiquity, to the dwellers in them modern New York would have appeared as fantastic as any observation Swift attributed to Gulliver.<sup>2</sup> A student of the municipal life of the nineteenth century has aptly stated that the "most remarkable social phenomenon of the present century is the concentration of population in cities."<sup>3</sup>

The growth of cities has been, in large measure, a result of the Industrial Revolution. It is true that the trek to cities has existed for many centuries. It was the latter nineteenth century, however, when the extraordinary shift of population from rural to urban areas took place. Furthermore, the demand for a greatly increased labor supply, which was a direct outcome of the Industrial Revolution, resulted in an excessive immigration to America, and the new population became unduly concentrated in the large cities. This influx not only added greatly to the number of those who must receive educational service but also increased the complexity of an adequate educational program and made it more difficult, because of the diversified population, to provide the facilities required.

Such expansion in numbers, with the improvements which accompanied the more recent changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, made necessary and possible further marvelous developments. Significant changes resulted in transportation facilities; methods of receiving, preserving, and distributing food supplies; water, sewage

<sup>1</sup> Benham, W. F., *Book of Quotations, Proverbs and Household Words*, p. 453.

<sup>2</sup> Reed, T. H., *Municipal Government in the United States*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Weber, A. F., *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 1.

disposal, and lighting systems; et cetera. These various types of service and the increasing variety of productive and business enterprises have created a notable increase in the number of vocational opportunities offered, and a variety within each field. These opportunities in turn led to a demand for an expansion and differentiation of the educational program far beyond the imagination of the educator of earlier days.

Another important outcome of this revolution in the industrial world has been the change in the relationship of employee to employer. Formerly the relationship was in the main personal. The apprentice worked for his master and the journeyman worked for his employer. Even if the employer had several men working for him, his relationship to them was individual rather than collective. The conditions brought about by the Industrial Revolution made it imperative for workers to combine in organizations for the protection of their economic interests and for mutual helpfulness in other ways. The advancing recognition gradually won by the workers and their insistence upon the provision of adequate educational opportunity for their children threw an enormously increased burden upon the schools, as compared with the previous situation in which the education of the "poor" was relatively neglected. Another demand of the workers was for compulsory school attendance legislation, which brought the school system face to face with the responsibility of providing education for all the children of all the people for a greater number of years. Thus, again, the magnitude and complexity of the educational service increased.

The concentration in the city of people of wealth and talent gave it the lead in cultural development. This brought with it the opportunity and the obligation of providing education on increasingly higher levels. Such developments in the city were far in advance of those in less populated areas and resulted in bringing into the cities interested persons from all parts of the country. This demand for a higher level and for greater variety within

the educational service brought a further challenge to educational leadership within the city.

The rapid progress of the cities led to an extension of influence far beyond the limits of their own boundaries. This influence aroused, not infrequently, the distrust of those living in the less populated areas. The distrust manifested itself in state legislation which, in many cases, limited the freedom of cities. The near approach to the ridiculous in this regard is found in a statute of the State of California concerning Los Angeles which made the employment of a clerk or secretary to aid the superintendent of schools illegal and yet permitted the employment of "teachers" for secretarial purposes.<sup>4</sup> Toward the end of the nineteenth century there was a fortunate tendency on the part of the state to interfere less with strictly municipal affairs.

The urgency of the need and the availability of financial resources brought about a more rapid development of educational facilities in the city than in the rural areas. The provision of new types of educational service in the cities was usually followed first by the provisions of similar facilities in other communities and later by the general adoption of parts of the program by the state as a whole. Usually cities not only have met the minimum standards as specified by the state but have made even more adequate provisions.

The cities began to vie with each other in the provisions, of educational facilities in excess of the minimum standards established by the state. They began to be on the lookout for improvements. This resulted in much intervisitation on the part of those interested in school administration and led to a wholesome comparison of services and results. There was a demand for educational leaders who recognized the best practices of various cities and were prepared to meet the challenge of a comparison between the results being achieved in their community and the achievements in other places.

The expansion and increasing complexity of organization

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<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 25, 1885.

necessary to provide the essential services brought to an issue the question of responsibility for the management of community life. The functional interrelationships of the municipal council and the board of education had to be worked through to a satisfactory solution. The increase in the matters which had to be cared for by the educational authority brought to the fore the problem of providing more adequately for these functions. Herein have been found the opportunities and the responsibilities of the city superintendent of schools.

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## CHAPTER II

AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

In order to consider this problem in a valid manner it is necessary that a statement be made concerning the conditions which, for the purpose of this study, shall warrant the assertion that the superintendency has been established. The indigenous and evolutionary characteristics of the administration of the school systems in question make the formulation of such a statement exceedingly difficult. The inexpediency of asserting that the superintendency was established at a specific time is clearly evident from a consideration of the expression of Thomas Stockwell, Commissioner of Education in Rhode Island for many years, that "under the old regime of the local school committee, as the sole custodian of the power of control, now and then, in a town, an individual would come to the front whose natural love for the work was such he could not quench it, and so he was obliged to take it up as a labor of love, and as a result the schools began at once to improve in every direction.

"Now, that man was actually a superintendent of schools and he exercised the functions of that office, though he was never called such, never elected, nor, [sic] indeed, never thought of as such."<sup>1</sup> Similarly city clerks, secretaries of boards of education, treasurers of boards of education, et cetera, in certain cases might be regarded as superintendents. For our purposes in this chapter, however, these individuals will be considered forerunners of the superintendents. In only those situations where the name superintendent has been commonly used will the office be considered as having been established.

This concept of when the superintendency shall be considered to have been established in any city is arbitrary and indefensible except in that it will facilitate the treatment of materials available and lend itself, more than any

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<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, p. 118, 1884.



other treatment, to making comprehensible the facts presented. Our chief interest is in those beginnings of the superintendency which grew and had a widespread influence. Little attention therefore will be given to situations of the type Dr. Noble<sup>2</sup> referred to with respect to New Orleans, which admittedly have had little or no direct influence in present-day administrative practices. For a similar reason it is not deemed expedient to delve back many centuries into the practices of city school systems, for city school systems, in their extended development, are not much older than the superintendency; in fact, in a surprising number of cases they are not so old as the superintendency.

The first task is to present the school administrative agencies in cities having public school systems before the superintendency existed; and the second to present the facts in regard to cities without public school systems previous to the establishment of the superintendency. Both are necessary for an intelligent consideration of the factors which brought about the establishment of the superintendency.

Suzzallo, in his treatise on *The Rise of Local School Supervision in Massachusetts*, has presented the facts relating to the administration of schools as regulated through the town meeting.<sup>3</sup> The activity of the town meeting in the field of education continued in certain cities until the establishment of the superintendency, although, in a far greater number of cases, the city council was responsible for the creation of the school committee and other agents of administration. The eastern states in the first three decades of the nineteenth century were not actively engaged in education and frequently, in city charters, gave absolute control of education to the municipal authorities. A similar authority was granted in the West and South in later decades because the newness or pooriness of the area prevented widespread

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<sup>2</sup> Noble, S. C., "Early School Superintendents in New Orleans." *School and Society*, Vol. 24, pp. 274-279, November, 1931.

<sup>3</sup> Suzzallo, H., *The Rise of Local School Supervision in Massachusetts*, pp. 5-23.

state activity in education. This grant of control was desirable, for the concentration of wealth and educational demands of the city were such as to lead the educational developments in the city much in advance of the less wealthy and more simply organized sections of the state. So considerable was the delegation of educational affairs to the city that in many instances the feeling developed that the control of education belonged to the electorate of the city. This feeling was evinced not only in the popular election of the superintendent but to an even greater extent in the frequent demands of the people and press that the city superintendent be "home talent" or an elector. This condition, as well as the control exercised over phases of the superintendency, such as its establishment, the election of the superintendent, and the salary paid, will be made evident in following chapters. It is sufficient here to say that in a very large number of cases the school committee appointed by the council was checked in many ways. In the following paragraphs will be found instances of municipal control of education exercised directly by the council.

Los Angeles had a somewhat unique plan of caring for its children before a school committee was established by the council. "By resolution of the council \$100 a month are [sic] spent on schools, and three schools were thus subsidized until the end of last month in return for providing free tuition to some poor children."<sup>4</sup> Mayor Caronel attacked this plan as being too "exacting a drain upon the funds of the city" because it did not enable Los Angeles to demand its share of the state school fund, and a public school system under the immediate charge of a committee and superintendent was the result.

The schools of Providence from 1800 to 1828 were under the management of the town council. During the period the council was assisted by the school committee but the council made all rules and regulations, elected preceptors, reviewed cases of discipline, directed school visitations, ap-

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<sup>4</sup> Los Angeles, "Address of Mayor A. F. Caronel." *Minutes, City Council*, May 13, 1853.

pointed "a committee for the purpose of examining into the qualifications of candidates for the preceptorships of the public schools," et cetera. Of interest also is the fact that at a joint meeting of the council and the school committee held October 17, 1816, it was thought advisable by the committee and voted that the public schools "be under the superintending care of Reverend Clergy interim between the several Quarterly visitations."<sup>5</sup>

This is pointed out as the only situation of its type encountered in the study, although at an earlier date, and in smaller towns even at this time, it was a usual thing for the clergy to have control of some phases of public education. This was true to any extended degree only in New England. The idea was carried over to the extent that early boards of education in some instances had a considerable number of clergymen on them. St. Louis is an interesting example of a different concept of the proper place of the clergyman for there it was provided that "the board shall appoint, yearly, four school examiners for the schools in each house who shall be qualified by education to examine teachers. They shall not be clergymen."<sup>6</sup>

Of all large cities in the country Buffalo presents the most extended period of control of the schools by the council. The council assumed the control of the schools in 1839,<sup>7</sup> following an investigation of the school situation by the superintendent, and retained its control throughout the century. Another interesting example of direct council control was in Memphis where the board of mayor and aldermen decided in 1848 to use their right, given in the charter, to establish a system of free schools and each alderman thereupon "established a free school in his ward."<sup>8</sup>

These examples of council control were exceptions rather than the rule. It should be kept in mind that in some cities

<sup>5</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 29, 1899-1900.

<sup>6</sup> St. Louis, "Rules and Regulations." *Minutes Board of Education*, December 22, 1838.

<sup>7</sup> Steele, O. G., "History of Buffalo Schools." Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 78-79, 1862.

<sup>8</sup> Young, J. P., *History of Memphis*, p. 398.

the board of education was independent from the beginning and that in a greater number of cities the council, in the exercise of its charter right, appointed a school committee or board of education to handle some phases of the work which had to be done in connection with the schools. Some charters later provided for the board of education to be appointed by the council. In many instances charters and acts provided for the popular election of a board of education which had previously been appointed by the council. Statutes generally followed the desire of the council and delegated, as the council previously had done of its own accord, to the board of education the supervisory functions, frequently retaining for action of the council those problems which related to finances and buildings.<sup>9</sup> This practice led to all types of dual or even triple control of the schools. The situation became so acute that the state board of education in Rhode Island reported that "there is hardly an improvement that can be suggested that does not meet its main obstacle in the dual form of government under which we now carry on our schools in more than two thirds of our towns."<sup>10</sup> In Jersey City, in 1877, the superintendent complained, upon examining a schoolhouse, that "probably no wise man would keep a horse in a building so poor as this" and that the "state of things has existed for years and numberless have been the complaints of teachers, parents, children, superintendents of schools and boards of education, but those who hold the purse strings hold them tighter than

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<sup>9</sup> For developments of the type related in this paragraph see: Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July 1, 1848; August 6, 1850; *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, p. 21, 1856; Tennessee, *Laws*, 1858, "Act Incorporating the Memphis City Schools passed March 20, 1858"; Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 33-34, 1869; *Charter and Supplement of 1871*, Section 13; Los Angeles, *Minutes, Common Council*, May 19, 1854; April 26, 1866; *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 94-95, 1896-1897; Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Visitors*, January 12, 1839; Louisville, *Charter*, 1851, Article X, section 1; Indianapolis, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 43, 1879; Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 88-89, 1855-1856; p. 111, 1861-1862.

<sup>10</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, p. 29, 1890.

ever.”<sup>11</sup> This superintendent and other leaders in education in Jersey City, who, until 1897, had to contend with the board of street and water commissioners to have school buildings erected, probably would not have regretted it had Jersey City, when it was considering a new charter in 1850, followed the advice of Citizen D, a “respected citizen,” and provided for unitary control in the hands of a board of education, thus adopting a plan which he termed “far better and more economical and efficient than the miserable plan of entrusting the cause of general education to the step-fatherhood of the common council.”<sup>12</sup>

It is interesting to note that the council attempted to control in instances where it was powerless. Thus in Richmond, in 1873, the city council by resolution asked the board of education for an explanation of the discharge of one of the three German teachers and “why less salary is paid to German teachers than any other class,” and the school board took the opportunity, “the first occasion which has presented itself,” to call to the council’s attention that it was without authority for such inquiries and that “the school board of the city of Richmond is not responsible to your honorable body, and the board submits that the inexpediency of such an accountability is as manifest as its illegality.”<sup>13</sup> The Richmond board of education recognized a danger such as Andrew Freese, first superintendent of schools in Cleveland, pointed out when he wrote, “Boards of education were so trammelled with ordinances and school laws that were a vexation and a shame, that they builded, not better, but not half as well as they knew.”<sup>14</sup>

Before the establishment of the superintendency, the school committee, board of trustees, board of education, or other named body had the direct administration of the schools in general. It is not to be inferred from this that

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<sup>11</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 67, 1877.

<sup>12</sup> Jersey City, *Daily Telegraph*, December 19, 1850.

<sup>13</sup> Richmond, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 24, 1873.

<sup>14</sup> Freese, A., *Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools*, pp. 78-79.

with the establishment of the superintendency conditions were always radically changed. As will be shown in each chapter dealing with the relationships of the superintendent, the various boards of education clung tenaciously to various duties which advanced thought definitely assigned to the superintendent. While it is not necessary to go into this in much detail, early conditions in various cities must be described. Each city which will be mentioned has made a rather significant contribution to the solution of the problem.

Very early in our educational history the value of supervision was recognized. Thus, in 1828, a special school committee of Providence reported that "unless the schools be visited frequently and examined thoroughly and unless the school committees determine to give to this subject all the attention and reflection and labor necessary to carry the system of education to as great a degree of perfection as the case admits, everything will be fruitless. Without this, every plan of education will fail and with it almost any may be made to succeed."<sup>15</sup>

The responsibilities of the office of school committee members in general were heavy. Northend pronounced the duties "important and arduous; its rewards—pecuniary or honorary—quite inconsiderable."<sup>16</sup> The Worcester school committee similarly reported that "their office has been no sinecure" and that "the first, second and last requisitions of their office, have been, labor, labor, labor, and that continually."<sup>17</sup> The members of the Springfield school committee stated that "they believe that no committee ever has, or ever will perform the duties required by law of the committee of this town."<sup>18</sup> Their report further pointed out

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<sup>15</sup> Higginson, T. W., *History of Public Education in Rhode Island from 1636 to 1876*, p. 168.

<sup>16</sup> Northend, C., "Some of the Obstacles to the Greater Success of the Common School." American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 73-74, 1844.

<sup>17</sup> Worcester, *Annual Report, Board of Overseers of the Common Schools*, p. 11, 1844.

<sup>18</sup> Springfield, *Annual Report, School Committee*, n. p. 1842.

that the visitorial duties alone would require two days of each week of each committeeman "for the mere pittance of a dollar a day . . . too little for compensation, and no stimulant for philanthropy."<sup>19</sup>

While a consideration of the various duties of the school boards might be presented here, it is deemed inexpedient because such a presentation would inevitably duplicate in many instances the materials presented to illustrate the conditions which led to the establishment of the superintendency.<sup>20</sup> For this reason attention will now be turned to agents of administration other than the school committee, and the reader may refer to the following chapter for the working of the schools in situations where the school committee or board of education attempted to perform its duties unaided.

The public school system of Cleveland was established in 1837 by an ordinance which provided for a board of five school managers, who were to provide a school in each district, provide expedient and proper regulations, examine and employ teachers, fix teachers' salaries subject to the approval of the council, and make repairs and purchase supplies, subject to the consent of the council when the supplies or repairs exceed ten dollars a year.<sup>21</sup> As the number of schools increased and the labor broadened, it required more time than the average manager could give to it; he then usually neglected visiting entirely, feeling that he could not spend sufficient time in visiting to form correct judgments and that there was consequently no practical use in spending any time in that way.<sup>22</sup> The result was an ordinance, passed June 19, 1841, providing that for this year "Madison Kelley be and is hereby designated to perform the duties hereinafter specified during the pleasure of the council—and that at each annual election of the school managers hereafter held one of the managers elected shall

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Post*, pp. 31-56.

<sup>21</sup> Burns, J. J., *Educational History of Ohio*, pp. 378-379.

<sup>22</sup> Freese, A., *Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools*, p. 76.

be designated or appointed by the city council to perform the said duties.”<sup>23</sup> The duties of the manager designated were to keep a “sett of books” in which he is to enter an account with each teacher and school district, “to provide fuel, take charge of the buildings and fixtures, and certify to the council the correctness of all accounts against the city for teaching or for rents, fuel, repairs, or fixtures on or about the school houses.”<sup>24</sup> The ordinance further provided that for these services he be paid a “fair and reasonable compensation” out of the Schoolhouse Fund. In 1841 the salary drawn by Kelley was one hundred dollars. The “acting agent for the school managers” received two hundred dollars in salary the following year, a figure which was maintained until near the end of the existence of this office when the acting school manager, as the officer was now commonly known, received three hundred dollars remuneration. From the establishment of the office until the election of the first superintendent in 1853, whereby it was hoped to secure a professionally trained man, three people served as acting manager. The first, Charles Bradburn, was chiefly interested in buildings and business. He devoted at least one fourth of his time to this office during the years 1841-1848. George Willey succeeded Bradburn and “looked much to the philosophy of education” and was “the controlling mind in all matters having close relation to educational work—fixing relative values to the several exercises and subjects of study as a guidance in the distribution of labor, and otherwise harmonizing the scheme of instruction and making it effective.”<sup>25</sup> Each man who served as acting manager was engaged in some other business at the same time. In regard to these men, as well as almost all the men who served on the board of managers, it must be noted that they were among the strongest men educationally and the most influential citizens of the city.

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<sup>23</sup> Cleveland, *Ordinance Book A*, p. 108, 1836-1857.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Freese, A., *Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools*, p. 56.



A very considerable number of them were college graduates and they were the leading business and professional men. This was true of a number of the western cities. The Denver Board in 1874 was composed of men of such quality that any one of them "could have justly been elected the superintendent without surprising the town as to his ability to administer the schools. W. C. Lothrop had been territorial superintendent of public instruction."<sup>26</sup>

Before leaving Cleveland it is in order to note that from 1849 to 1866, inclusive, the board of managers and, later, the board of education, with the acting manager and superintendent respectively, were supplemented in their supervisory activities by a board of inspectors or school visitors. At first the board prepared excellent reports and submitted them to the council, but as the work increased there was a gradual falling off in the number and completeness of the reports made; consequently in 1868 this plan of supervision was abandoned.<sup>27</sup> This is similar to the attempt made in many cities to improve supervision of a lay nature. In some instances, as in Cleveland, a separate board was appointed, while in others there was a demand that the number of members of the board be increased.<sup>28</sup> In Baltimore, for example, the members of the board of commissioners reported that they "in their last report recommended to the council the enlargement of their board, believing that by so doing it would enable them to give more of their personal attention to the schools than if their number were small; experience during the last year satisfies them that the effect has not been produced which was so anxiously desired; they would therefore respectfully ask that the number of commissioners be diminished."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Letter of W. H. Smiley, Superintendent Emeritus, Denver Public Schools.

<sup>27</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 45-46, 1876.

<sup>28</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 9, 1836; Louisville, *Minutes, Mayor and Board of Councilmen*, July 31, 1837; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of School Trustees*, p. 1, 1838.

<sup>29</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 2, 1838.

Thus destined to disappointment in obtaining beneficial results from their efforts in behalf of the schools of Baltimore, the commissioners sought other means. They asked for authority to appoint a superintendent. The city council failed to act on the request of the commissioners.<sup>30</sup> Then a committee of the board of school commissioners was appointed, which studied various city school systems of the country. The committee reported favoring the establishment of the superintendency, but among the board members there was "much difference of opinion" and action was not taken immediately.<sup>31</sup> Later, by a vote of ayes six, nays five, the board adopted a resolution asking for authority to appoint a superintendent.<sup>32</sup> No action was taken by the council but the commissioners in favor of professional supervision were not to be denied in their efforts to improve the schools and, on June 18, 1849, elected Rev. J. N. M'Jilton,<sup>33</sup> former teacher and member of the board of commissioners of the public schools, as treasurer. Prior to this time the duties of the treasurer were performed by a member of the board. Before the treasurer was elected, however, a committee was appointed to "define the duties of the next treasurer." This committee reported<sup>34</sup> that five hundred dollars was too large a salary for merely receiving and disbursing the money of the board, et cetera, and that there were "compatible with the office of the treasurer various additional duties which your committee think can be confided to that officer with advantage to the public schools." They pointed out that the present treasurer had performed many of them without being required to do so by any resolution or rule. The committee then recommended, and it was ruled, that the treasurer should be in charge of the stationery;

<sup>30</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, January 7, 1846.

<sup>31</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 7, 1847.

<sup>32</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, January 4, 1848.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, June 18, 1849.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, May 10, 1849.

examine the quarterly returns of the teachers and compare them with the admissions returned by the commissioners; report the names of delinquent teachers; "visit the schools frequently, to obtain, and report in writing when required by a resolution of the board, statistical and other information relating to the schools, schoolhouses, repairs, books, stationery and finances"; attend all board meetings, supply any information he may possess on the public schools; keep office hours and afford to citizens and strangers all information in his power concerning the public schools. The remainder of his time was to be devoted "to the inspection of the schools and the collection of outstanding dues." This arrangement appears to have worked satisfactorily until the business and financial aspect demanded too much of the treasurer's time, a condition that was discussed by the president<sup>35</sup> of the board of commissioners and by the treasurer in the report of 1857. The treasurer<sup>36</sup> said that as long as it was possible he derived much satisfaction out of visiting, giving personal attention to the schools, reviewing the operations, and obtaining information. He proposed that he be relieved of the responsibility and labor connected with the disbursement of the fund appropriated to the support of public instruction. This he felt should be imposed upon the register of the city, the financial officer of the corporation. Following these recommendations in 1859, the treasurer was relieved of a very considerable portion of his office duties, which were assigned to the clerk of the board. The president<sup>37</sup> then reported that the treasurer now had time to attend to such functions as "visiting and examining the schools, conferring with and counseling the teachers, and making such suggestions as his long experience and intimate knowledge of the work render advisable," and that the "performance of this duty is of first importance." The years following 1859 found the

<sup>35</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 31-32, 1857.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11, 1859.

treasurer caring for repairs, preparing schedules of study for the grammar and primary schools in cooperation with the principals; offering suggestions to the teachers when visiting; and, above all, examining the classes by means of extemporaneous examinations,<sup>38</sup> the answer of a preceding question frequently being the basis of the succeeding inquiry. Superintendence of the schools thus became "by far the most important as well as the most laborious part of the treasurer's duty" and was performed with "such industry and ability as have impressed upon the schools a character of intelligent proficiency which has elevated them to a position fully equal to that attained by the best schools in the country."<sup>39</sup> The treasurer was always "hailed with pleasure" by teachers and pupils. In 1866,<sup>40</sup> when the city council and the mayor desired to establish a superintendency, they converted the office of treasurer into that of superintendent of the schools. The office of treasurer was discontinued and the city register assumed charge of making the disbursements.

Another forerunner of the office of superintendent—an office which existed more widely than that of acting manager or treasurer, was that of the acting visitor. Massachusetts<sup>41</sup> led the way in this development when, in 1826, it allowed the town committee, "for the general charge and superintendence of all the public schools," to delegate to "one or more" of its members the duty of making monthly or more frequent visitations of the schools. In 1827 this was further extended so that the two visits to be made at the beginning and close of school could be similarly delegated. The claim of Dr. Payson Smith<sup>42</sup> that Cambridge in 1836 had the first superintendent in the country is based

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49, 1862.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22, 1865.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5, 1866.

<sup>41</sup> Suzzallo, H., *The Rise of Local School Supervision in Massachusetts*, p. 144.

<sup>42</sup> Smith, P., "What Progress Has Superintendence Made?" *Proceedings*, Department of Superintendence, National Education Association, p. 37, 1925.

on growth under this legislation. A somewhat similar development occurred in Connecticut. The early growth of the board of school visitors in Connecticut is described by Morrison.<sup>43</sup> It is sufficient for our purpose merely to point out that the board of visitors was charged with instructional matters and that, by the act of 1839, they were permitted "to appoint a committee of one or two persons, to exercise all the powers, and perform all the duties of the whole board, under their advice and direction, and receive one dollar a day for the time actually employed."<sup>44</sup>

In turning to New Haven to note the evolution of this office into the superintendency, it was found that on November 2, 1853, the board of visitors of the First School Society recommended, and caused to be adopted at the meeting of the Society, "that inasmuch as the law authorizes the board of school visitors to designate one of their number for special care in their department, and inasmuch as such special care is needful and deserves compensation, a sum not exceeding two hundred dollars shall be paid from the treasury of this district to such person as the board of visitors shall appoint to the office of 'acting visitor.'<sup>45</sup> A year later at a meeting of the First School Society it was offered and referred to a committee on finance and the wants of the Society "that the acting visitor shall have under the instructions of the board of visitors, a supervision of all the educational concerns of the schools, their discipline, management, books, maps and such oversight over the school furniture and school buildings as may be entrusted to him by the Society's committee."<sup>46</sup> This is of interest in that it shows an early recognition of the need of a single head and aims to entrust the acting visitor with duties held not only by the board of visitors but by the committee which was in charge of buildings and finance.

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<sup>43</sup> Morrison, J. C., *Legal Status of the City School Superintendent*, pp. 10-27.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>45</sup> New Haven, *School Report*, p. 26, 1853.

<sup>46</sup> New Haven, *Proceedings, First School Society*, November 9, 1854.

On December 20, 1854, C. J. Babcock, who had been elected acting visitor in November, accepted the position, since he had learned in the interim of "the nature of the duties and responsibilities to be imposed upon that officer."<sup>47</sup> In 1856 the First School Society voted to accept the act of the legislature to change the name of the Society to the "New Haven City School District," and, after making provision for a board of education, voted that the "board of education be authorized to fix the salary of the acting visitor not exceeding \$500 per year," and that "the salary of the acting member of the board of education on finance, building school-houses, and repairs generally, be \$200 for the year ensuing."<sup>48</sup> Thus we note a dual administration, developing in this case out of the former existence of two boards, one devoting its energy to business interests and the other to instructional interests of the schools. A short time after the reorganization of the board of education, D. C. Gilman was elected acting visitor. In 1857, in a letter from the principal of Hillhouse High School, he is termed superintendent. Officially, however, he remained acting visitor through three very active years, organizing active teachers' institutes; examining the scholars at "appointed and unappointed times"; settling misunderstandings between parents and teachers; promoting attendance; selecting teachers; criticizing textbooks; and attending to visitors. So vigorously did he perform these duties that upon resigning in 1859, when he expressed the opinion that "the schools of New Haven are so numerous, and their standard so high, as to render the undivided attention of a competent man absolutely necessary for their supervision,"<sup>49</sup> the board of education adopted his suggestion, and the next year appeared the report of the "acting school superintendent." New Haven thus had a city or town superintendent before such terminology appeared in the laws of Connecticut, due, prob-

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<sup>47</sup> New Haven, *Proceedings, Meeting of First School Society Committee and Board of Visitors*, December 20, 1854.

<sup>48</sup> New Haven, *Proceedings, First School Society*, October 25, 1856.

<sup>49</sup> New Haven, *School Report*, pp. 24-25, 1859.

ably, to the genius of Gilman,<sup>50</sup> who had already developed those powers which were destined to gain wide recognition at the University of California and at Johns Hopkins University.

Due to the existence of two major educational agencies providing education for the masses, New York City had two forerunners of the superintendent. The first agency was the Public School Society of New York which, in 1828, appointed a visitor<sup>51</sup> to visit the families of the poor and urge the attendance of their children at school. A business man who was a member of the board of trustees accepted the appointment.<sup>52</sup> In 1833 the office of visitor was abolished and the duties of the visitor, Samuel Seton, now became those of exercising a general business supervision as agent. His chief work was the receipt and distribution of supplies, and he continued in this position until, at the union of the Public School Society with the public schools, he became an assistant superintendent.

The second agency was public control of education through the county. The county superintendent of common schools of the city and county of New York, whose office was established in 1844,<sup>53</sup> perhaps has a better claim than the visitor or agent of the Public School Society to being considered the father of the city superintendent of New York. His chief duties were to visit and examine the schools as often as was practicable; to examine persons offering themselves as teachers; and "by all means in his power to promote sound education, elevate the character and qualification of his teachers, improve the means of instruction and advance the interests of schools committed to his charge."<sup>54</sup> The only difference between the provisions of this act and the act establishing the city superintendency,

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<sup>50</sup> Franklin, F., *The Life of Daniel Coit Gilman*, p. 45.

<sup>51</sup> Bourne, W. O., *History of the Public School Society of the City of New York*, pp. 615-616.

<sup>52</sup> Boese, T., *Public Education in the City of New York*, p. 120.

<sup>53</sup> New York, *Manual, Board of Education*, pp. 146-147, 1850.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

which was passed July 3, 1851, was that the salary was now to be determined by the board of education instead of by statute, as in the previous act, and that the title was now to be city superintendent of the city and county.<sup>55</sup> The duties listed in the act of 1851, copied almost in their entirety from the act of 1844, were rather narrow in scope for a city superintendent and remained so for many years. Section 13 of the act of 1851 provided for the abolishment of the county superintendency.

In Brooklyn, while there was no special legislation, the county superintendent was also the predecessor of the city superintendent. From June, 1843, when the general act abolishing commissioners and inspectors took effect, the county superintendent was the sole source of authority and power for examining and licensing teachers in the city of Brooklyn.<sup>56</sup> As county superintendent of Kings County, his jurisdiction embraced the city as well as the country towns. It is of significance that the office of county superintendent was abolished by the act of November 13, 1847, and that the board of education was granted the right to appoint a city superintendent by the act of January 28, 1848.<sup>57</sup> Pittsburgh schools similarly were supervised by the county superintendent of Allegheny County under the act of 1854 until its first city superintendent was appointed in 1868. Denver had a similar experience until it attained a size sufficient to warrant its having a city superintendent.

Indianapolis furnishes an example of a city clerk's aiding the board of school trustees in their duties. In July, 1853, the clerk was ordered to secure padlocks and have them placed upon the gates of the fences enclosing the school-house lots. The summer of 1854 witnessed the city clerk, with the consent of one or more trustees, directing repairs

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18, 1851.

<sup>56</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, City Superintendent*, Appendix, p. 192, 1882.

<sup>57</sup> Brooklyn, *By-Laws and Rules and Regulations, Board of Education*, p. 4, 1849.



to doors and windows<sup>58</sup> and in November of the same year his duties were defined as follows:<sup>59</sup> to attend all meetings of the board and keep a record of proceedings; to keep a record of names of teachers and salaries; to keep account of all expenditures; to prepare statistics of the schools; to furnish teachers with copies of rules adopted; "to cause necessary repairs to be made in the windows, doors, gates, outhouses, pumps, fences and other appurtenances of the several schoolhouses—and he shall purchase brooms, brushes, buckets, and tinware for the use of the schools" and "perform such other duties as may be required by the board."

From the general existence of the office of secretary of the board of education, it is easy to believe that this officer in many instances assumed some of the duties which were later to be those of the superintendent. St. Louis offers a specific example of this when, in 1841, after having had a superintendent for a short time, the board of education ordered the secretary to perform the duties of the superintendent of the public schools of the city. The order stated that<sup>60</sup> "(1) He shall visit and inspect each department of each public school as often as once every week. (2) He shall advise and consult with the several teachers upon the conduct of the schools, the conduct of the scholars, and should be the medium of conversation between the teachers and the board of directors. (3) He shall keep a list of the names of all applicants for admission to the school, in the manner heretofore required of the male teachers and shall fill all vacancies as soon as they occur under the direction of the board." His other duties were to supply scholars with books and stationery; to secure uniformity in books used; to purchase wood and coal; to report repairs needed; to report to the board monthly all abuses, neglect of duty on the part of teachers, number of vacancies filled, number of ap-

<sup>58</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 22, 1854; August 19, 1854.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, November 4, 1854.

<sup>60</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 10, 1841.

plicants on file, and everything which he considered important; and "all other duties which properly and by virtue thereof belong to the office of superintendent which may by particular vote of the board be assigned to him." The east division of Minneapolis furnishes another example of the assumption of the duties of the superintendent by the secretary,<sup>61</sup> but perhaps in not so complete a way as in St. Louis.

In the east division of Minneapolis were found also principals of schools who performed duties which were later assumed by the superintendent. For example, each principal reported to the board monthly the condition of all the schools in his building.<sup>62</sup> This exercise by principals of many powers which in some instances later became those of the superintendent was rather widespread. When boards of education felt themselves losing command of the situation it was almost inevitable that they should turn to the principals, if no other officers were provided to help them. The entrusting of rather large powers to the principal will be brought out in another respect later on<sup>63</sup> when the conflict between principals and superintendent which continued in certain cities throughout the century is noted. In many instances where the trustee system existed and each trustee was more or less independent in handling the schools of his ward or district a situation probably existed similar to the one in Cincinnati. Here the control of the houses was placed in the hands of the principal or, more explicitly, by resolution of the board<sup>64</sup> there could be but one controlling principal in each district to whom, with the "appropriate visitor," it was intended to confide the grading of the schools, the classification of the pupils, and the arrangement of these under their respective teachers. At a later date, but before the establishment of the superintendency in Cincinnati, a committee composed of the principal teachers, re-

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<sup>61</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 215, 1876.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Post*, pp. 66-68; 224-225.

<sup>64</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, p. 5, 1838.

ported to the board, at its request, on the subject of classification and course of study.<sup>65</sup> At an even earlier date in Louisville it was decided to open a high school "under the superintendence of the principals of grammar and primary departments of the city school."<sup>66</sup> In Indianapolis the principals were responsible for the organization of schools into classes, the subdivision of those classes and the arrangement of the studies, the discipline of their respective schools, and reporting to the board of trustees "any case of neglect, apparent incompetency or failure on the part of any assistant teacher to perform his or her duties in a faithful or satisfactory manner."<sup>67</sup> The idea of substituting the principals for a superintendent was expressed by the state superintendent of schools of Maine when, in 1871, he urged the appointment of a competent city superintendent in Portland, but added that since the idea "meets with disapprobation, an approximate result might be obtained by uniting several schools in one building, under the control of a headmaster and as many assistant teachers as are necessary."<sup>68</sup>

In Springfield the school committee, after repeated appeals for the appointment of a superintendent, voted that it is the "duty of the principal of the East Union Street Grammar School to exercise a general superintendence over the group of schools connected with his own as graded schools," and that, in the discharge of this duty, he should prescribe rules; take cognizance of misdemeanors; administer proper discipline; aid in "interior discipline when requested by the teachers respectively"; direct transfer of pupils; advise with teachers in respect to the course of study; and, for the above purposes, "he may visit said schools as often as he shall think be necessary and proper."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, August 15, 1848.

<sup>66</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, October 22, 1834.

<sup>67</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, November 15, 1854.

<sup>68</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 143, 1872.

<sup>69</sup> Springfield, *Minutes, School Committee*, December 14, 1863.

Thus, we see the principal securing the administration of schools other than his own building and becoming in a sense a district superintendent.

The consideration of this substitute for the superintendent would not be complete without a mention of Philadelphia, long subject to bitter attacks and scorn because of the late establishment of the superintendency. Frequently attacks were made similar to that by Amos Kellogg who wrote: "Every city or town of 5000 inhabitants needs a superintendent to manage its schools . . . It will pay everywhere to superintend education—except Philadelphia."<sup>70</sup> The early work of Alexander Bache as high school principal is well known. Principals with any considerable power did not come to exist very early, however. In 1870 it was proposed that in order to secure greater uniformity, harmony, and efficiency the principals of the male grammar schools should be constituted superintendents of their respective sections.<sup>71</sup> However, in 1880, the president of the board of education urged the creation of supervising principalships by apportioning those students now taught by the principal to the other teachers. A rule permitting sectional boards to organize upon this principle had previously been passed, and in three sections they were now so organized.<sup>72</sup> The president stated that since the board was the responsible head, its members should make such a reorganization imperative.<sup>73</sup> Regardless of all this, however, the principals in Philadelphia had become superintendents to a real extent by the time it was proposed and considered by the board of education that the principals should constitute a board of superintendents who should elect one of their number annually as principal superintendent.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> New York, *School Journal and Educational News*, p. 9, November 11, 1876.

<sup>71</sup> Philadelphia, *Minutes, Board of Controllers*, November 8, 1870.

<sup>72</sup> For relationship of sectional and central boards of education, see pp. 151-153.

<sup>73</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 12-14, 1880.

<sup>74</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal, Board of Public Education*, April 14, 1882.

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<sup>73</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 12-14, 1880.

<sup>74</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal, Board of Public Education*, April 14, 1882.

Philadelphia should be mentioned also because of its appointment of a building inspector, later known as the superintendent of public school buildings and repairs, seventeen years before the appointment of a superintendent. In a number of cities such a full-time office developed before that of the superintendency, while in other cities it was the practice to employ a superintendent to supervise the erection of a particular building. It was found necessary to obtain outside assistance for other matters than the erection of buildings; for example, in Washington, Zalmon Richards was employed to conduct teachers' institutes many years before he became superintendent, and in a number of cases a committee of competent individuals, not members of the board, were employed to examine teachers and pupils. In Seattle there arose a demand for the classification of pupils and, as no superintendent was employed, former President Hall,<sup>75</sup> of the University of Washington, served to secure the classification desired. In many instances, of course, all these duties were carried on by the boards themselves. Members of boards conducted teachers' meetings and often, in the matter of supervising the schools, did more than have a local trustee look after his own schools. In Springfield, Massachusetts,<sup>76</sup> for example, each member of the school committee had a different section of the city to supervise each portion of the year and, thus, in the course of the year, each member came in contact with every school. In St. Louis the board, after having tried a superintendent and a secretary as superintendent, divided the city periodically among its members for supervisory purposes. All the members were designated as superintendents and reported quarterly<sup>77</sup> on the number of pupils admitted, the fees collected for stationery, and a general statement of expenses. The fact that these men represented the board of trustees as a unit rather than merely looking after a ward personally,

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<sup>75</sup> Bagley, C. B., *History of Seattle from the Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, Vol. 1, pp. 164-165.

<sup>76</sup> Springfield, *Minutes, School Committee*, May 15, 1850.

<sup>77</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 3, 1846.

as was often the case in other cities, was brought out clearly when the superintendent of Public School No. 1 did not consider the applications for the admittance of pupils unless they had "been so far advanced in their studies as to enable them to commence reading." The board voted that this action be held as being "contrary to and subversive of the principles of common sense and common justice," and resolved that the exercise of such authority by any superintendent is reprehensible and "is not and will not be sanctioned by this board."<sup>78</sup>

To the agents serving in an administrative capacity which have been thus far considered, powers have been in general delegated. There were situations, however, where powers were simply assumed. A case in point is that of Josiah Hooker in Springfield, Massachusetts, who was a member of the school committee for twenty-two years and for much of this time was its chairman. "The office of superintendent of schools had not been created, and the duties of such an officer were mainly discharged by him; . . . as the population of our city increased and our schools increased with it, and especially as improvements were demanded and made, he devoted himself to this work more assiduously until it finally occupied most of his time; . . . for several of the last years of such service and when it was the greatest he refused all pecuniary compensation for it."<sup>79</sup> Similarly Simeon Goodwin served in Louisville;<sup>80</sup> General Rufus King, in Milwaukee, not only kept the records but did "much of the work of supervising, examining teachers and visiting schools himself";<sup>81</sup> Nathan Guilford in Cincinnati, was likened to "the old wheel horse who has borne the 'heat and burden of the day' through the infancy and into the manhood of our excellent common school system."<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September, 1, 1846.

<sup>79</sup> Springfield, *Minutes, School Committee*, October 3, 1870.

<sup>80</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 10, 1867.

<sup>81</sup> Conrad, H. L., *History of Milwaukee from Its First Settlement to the Year 1895*. Vol. 1, p. 132.

<sup>82</sup> Cincinnati, *Gazette*, April 1, 1850.



This listing of administrative agencies existing before the establishment of the superintendency will be supplemented by the following chapters, which deal with causes and factors favoring and opposing the establishment of the superintendency. Before turning to this portion of the material it is fitting to consider very briefly the facts concerning cities which had made no beginning, or the merest beginning, in the establishment of a school system before the adoption of the superintendency. Thus, a year before the superintendency was created, the Council of San Francisco had authorized J. C. Pelton to open a free school for no more than one hundred pupils;<sup>83</sup> Los Angeles' city council had voted a few dollars to subsidize private teaching;<sup>84</sup> Richmond had aided in the maintenance of a Lancasterian school.<sup>85</sup> These beginnings were not sufficient, however, to cause any detailed administrative machinery to be provided before the superintendency was established. In certain cases, as in Memphis and in New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, the superintendent was present and opened the first school. In all these cities some private schools had existed previously and meager provisions may have been made for public schools. But tuition had not been done away with in public school systems even in instances where the superintendency was established, nor had the idea that public schools existed only for the poor been eradicated. In Kansas City the right to collect taxes for schools was won only two years before the establishment of the superintendency; around 1865 this battle was being waged in Missouri and "the press, the public educator, in some counties fell in with the opposition or maintained a lofty silence.

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<sup>83</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Public Schools*, 1876, quoted in United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 27, 1876.

<sup>84</sup> Guinn, J. M., "Beginnings of the School System of Los Angeles." *Historical Society of Southern California Publications*, Vol. 8, p. 201.

<sup>85</sup> Richmond, *Charter of February 21, 1842*; Christian, W. A., *Richmond, Her Past and Present*, p. 307.

Kansas City fared not better than other localities.”<sup>86</sup> In Atlanta, in 1869, the question of establishing a system of public schools came before the people and every honorable means was used with the hope of defeating the “innovations which some went even so far as to denounce as a ‘nuisance.’” Petition after petition was sent to the council, and to the board of education after that was formed, protesting strenuously against the proposed action.”<sup>87</sup>

While conditions were bad where no public school systems existed, many cities with school systems had developed them very meagerly in the light of present-day standards. In Buffalo, for instance, the first duty of the superintendent was “to ascertain where the schools were situated.” The superintendent reports that this “was accomplished after a few days’ exploration with a horse and buggy and after innumerable inquiries.”<sup>88</sup> In Denver it was reported that “the scholars are overcrowded and the teachers are overworked. Discipline and order are not what they should be and the progress of the pupils is slow. As a consequence those who can afford it send their children to private schools at home and abroad.”<sup>89</sup> In the same strain the superintendent of schools of Multnomah County, Oregon, in his report of 1874, wrote of Portland: “Our twenty-five schools, like so many separate units or ‘feudal baronies’ were governed by as many systems and precedents as there were teachers. The grades were indeed supposed to be defined, but were in a decidedly nebulous state.”<sup>90</sup>

It should not be supposed that such conditions were to clear immediately after some one appeared bearing the name of superintendent. In fact, superintendents in many cities went through the period discussed in this chapter with no forerunners to clear the way. A consideration of

<sup>86</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 21-22, 1877-1878.

<sup>87</sup> Reed, W. P., *History of Atlanta*, p. 337.

<sup>88</sup> Steele, O. G., “History of Buffalo Schools.” Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 77-79, 1862.

<sup>89</sup> Denver, *Rocky Mountain Daily News*, October 1, 1871.

<sup>90</sup> Portland, *Scrapbook*, p. 184.

the development of their powers, which follows in later chapters, will impress upon the reader the truth in the statement made by the president of the board of education in Brooklyn to the effect that "the organization of public school work in this country has remained where it was placed by the fathers, in the hands of the people in their various homes; and its fruition in the little red schoolhouse or in the big city system retains the earmarks of crudity and experiment. School Administration has so far lingered in the rear of the progressive legislation which has refined or rendered more scientific the conduct of other public matters. It is the pet child of home rule, and it dwells in an atmosphere of superstitious reverence. The reformer that would guide, correct or discipline it must be prepared to fight the public school fetich, which is so persistent because the people are so ignorant of how public schools are organized and conducted. The practical exfoliation of the idea of public school administration in this country is a study full of humor and full of sadness."<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Hendrix, J. C., "The Best Method of Appointing Public School Teachers." *Educational Review*, Vol. 3, p. 261, March, 1892.

## CHAPTER III

## FACTORS AND CONDITIONS INFLUENTIAL IN BRINGING ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

The source of the word "superintendent" as applied to school systems is not definitely known. The local school committees of Tisbury, Massachusetts were empowered "to superintend"<sup>1</sup> the schools in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In 1804<sup>2</sup> Congress conferred upon the council of the city of Washington the power to provide for the establishment and "superintendence of public schools." In December of the same year the council of Washington provided<sup>3</sup> that "the superintendence of public schools within the city of Washington shall be placed under the direction of a board of thirteen trustees." Newark early used the term "superintendents" when, at a town meeting in 1816, it was "Resolved, That the management of the Charity School devolve exclusively upon the superintendents of that establishment and that they be authorized generally to conduct and regulate its concerns in such a way as they may deem conducive to its welfare and the accomplishment of the designs of the institution."<sup>4</sup>

The school committee or board of education, bearing the brunt of early superintendence, needs to be examined for evidences of causes for the establishment of the superintendency.<sup>5</sup> That the office was designed for the relief of the school committee is evident from statements to the effect that the office of the superintendent has been created "by the board of directors to aid them in the discharge of their duties assigned to them by law";<sup>6</sup> "for the more convenient discharge of duties assigned by law to the board of school

<sup>1</sup> Suzzallo, H., *The Rise of Local School Supervision in Massachusetts*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Acts of Congress (2 Stat. 255). Approved February 24, 1804.

<sup>3</sup> "Act of City Council, December 5, 1804." District of Columbia, *Compilation of Laws*, pp. 1-2, 1804-1929.

<sup>4</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 6, 1857.

<sup>5</sup> For date of establishment of superintendency in various cities, see pp. 81-82.

<sup>6</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 8, 1845.

inspectors, and to aid them in performing same";<sup>7</sup> "for the more convenient discharge of the duties assigned by law to the school committee and to aid them in the performance of the same."<sup>8</sup> Similarly the committee on reform of the schools in Baltimore suggested that there were "many subjects daily requiring the action of this board which might be very properly transferred to the superintendent for his investigation"<sup>9</sup> and a committee on the appointment of a superintendent in Worcester reported that "some of the committee deemed such a measure necessary, but others hoped that the members of the present board would be so faithful in the discharge of their duties as to supersede the necessity of such an appointment."<sup>10</sup> While this is sufficient evidence to warrant a detailed search into the shortcomings and doings of the school committee for causes of the establishment of the superintendency, it is only fair to mention that the appointment of a superintendent was not always regarded in this light. Thus, in Brooklyn, the appointment of a superintendent "would not be designed to exonerate members of the board from due performance of their duties";<sup>11</sup> and in Worcester the school committee pointed out that it was a "popular mistake, into which even some school committees are liable to fall, to infer that the members of the Board are absolved from a considerable portion of their duties by the appointment of a superintendent."<sup>12</sup> A committee of the school committee of Boston in the same vein held "that it would not be advisable, if it were practicable, to take from the board as at present organized by law, or from any of the school committees, any of their existing powers or duties, or to throw them upon the super-

<sup>7</sup> Chicago, "Ordinance of City Council, November 28, 1853." *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1879.

<sup>8</sup> Providence, *By-Laws of School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools*, p. 10, 1846.

<sup>9</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, February 11, 1847.

<sup>10</sup> Worcester, *Minutes, School Committee*, May 7, 1849.

<sup>11</sup> Brooklyn, *Report, Committee of City Council on Public Schools*, p. 10, 1847.

<sup>12</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 12-13, 1858.

intendent.”<sup>13</sup> Despite these statements the superintendent, by the nature of the situation, assumed duties which had been, or should have been, performed to a greater or less extent by the board. This does not mean necessarily that school committees had less work after the appointment of a superintendent; but if the duties increased in number, they probably came gradually to have less of an executive and more of a legislative nature. This change in the duties of school committees was a result of the following, among other causes: the expansion of the educational system; the development of more capable professional employees; changes in the manner of electing the committees; changes in the organization of the committees and in the type of committeemen. In any event, an examination of the composition and functioning of school committees is required here.

Before the idea of the superintendency was widespread, the need of enlightened supervision was recognized and considered of extreme importance for the improvement of the common schools. By some a “deficiency” of the requisite material from which to constitute the committee of supervision<sup>14</sup> was thought to be an “inevitable and insuperable difficulty.” For those towns which did not contain men of adequate information and talent who were willing to accept the office it was proposed that there is “no necessity that all the members of the school committee should be inhabitants of that town for which they serve, and by which they are appointed. The committee may in part be taken from other towns in the vicinity.”<sup>15</sup>

The school committee, even in cities, was frequently an “uncertain, fluctuating and inexperienced body,”<sup>16</sup> a condition which was partially due to the annual election or appointment of all members. In Baltimore, in 1839, the board of school commissioners had only one member who had ever

<sup>13</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 23*, pp. 2-3, 1851.

<sup>14</sup> Farley, S., “Improvements Which May Be Made in the Condition of Common Schools.” American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 74-76, 1834.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 7, p. 307, October 15, 1845.

served previously.<sup>17</sup> The board of trustees and visitors of Cincinnati had a similar difficulty; in 1843 it asked that the law be changed to provide for the election of one member in each district each year to serve for a period of two years, in place of the former method of electing yearly two members who would serve for one year.<sup>18</sup> In Springfield an examination of the membership of the school committee for 1854, 1855, and 1856 reveals the fact that twenty-three men served, during these three years, on a school committee of eight members, and that the individual who served two of these three years, did so in 1854 and 1856, thus providing a total change in membership each year. Worcester had the same experience, and it was remarked in a report of the school committee that the case involved more than not securing uniformity of system under the circumstances, for the "individual members did not learn enough even to have a system."<sup>19</sup> Even Boston, characterized by John Swett as "Utopia," felt the need of a superintendent as a result of "the constant and annual change of members";<sup>20</sup> this is not surprising when we find that it required an individual who was an apt scholar to understand in one year of service "the three different plans of organization, and to get some little insight into the single and double-headed system."<sup>21</sup>

The short tenure of school committee members was not due alone to annual elections, however; resignations and declinations were frequent. Resignations often followed the year's service in Worcester, which was described as being "with some, the mission of the first two months to reform abuses, the experience of the next two to cool down and become conservative, the work of the following six to walk reluctantly at the heels of a routine, and the conclusion of

<sup>17</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 3, 1839.

<sup>18</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, p. 28, 1843.

<sup>19</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 62-63, 1854.

<sup>20</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 28*, pp. 40-41, 1846.

<sup>21</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 16*, pp. 5-16, 1851.

the matter . . . an unspeakable disgust at the whole transaction."<sup>22</sup> The increase in the size of the system and the consequent multiplication of duties made members shrink from the heavy work by "declining to serve another year,"<sup>23</sup> and men elected at the annual town meeting refused to take the oath of office.<sup>24</sup> Some of the wards in Springfield were entirely unrepresented during a considerable portion of the year 1853<sup>25</sup> because suitable persons were so reluctant to make the necessary sacrifice in their private affairs. In Washington <sup>26</sup> it was a difficult task to obtain competent persons to fill the office, and in Boston it was "no easy matter to secure the services of the requisite number of persons who have the ability and inclination to devote at least one twelfth part of the year to the severe exactions of the school and committee rooms."<sup>27</sup>

Difficulty was also experienced in getting the men who accepted the office to render the service of which they were capable. This caused dissatisfaction with boards of education and led many individuals to look upon the superintendency with favor. Horace Mann pointed out that when competition came between the private business of the committeeman and the public duty of visitation "there is always danger that the former will triumph in the rivalry."<sup>28</sup> This difficulty was recognized by a resolution of the Providence town meeting in 1819, which provided that a committeeman was not eligible for reelection if he missed in a year "two of the meetings for quarterly examination of the schools."<sup>29</sup> The Baltimore board of school commissioners in 1836 appealed for the appointment of men of leisure.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 11-12, 1855.

<sup>23</sup> Bristol, R. I., *Annual Report, School Committee*, n. p. 1849.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Springfield, *Annual Report, School Committee*, pp. 4-5, 1853.

<sup>26</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 23-24, 1867.

<sup>27</sup> Boston, *Report, Committee on Examination of Public Schools*, pp. 11-12, 1850.

<sup>28</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 351, November 15, 1841.

<sup>29</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 34, 1899-1900.

<sup>30</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 9, 1836.



State Superintendent Young, of New York, in 1843 reported to the legislature that "evidence of the faithlessness of the inspectors abounds in the reports" and stated that, while there are honorable exceptions, "it is not to be denied that the great object for which the office of inspector was created has been almost entirely overlooked or disregarded."<sup>31</sup> Charles Northend, in 1844, in speaking of the obstacles to the greater success of the schools, mentions the "entire neglect, or the partial and injudicious performance of school committees."<sup>32</sup> To all this lack of interest or faltering on the part of the committeemen there were exceptions, as in Boston, where it was reported that the "city may well boast of her public schools" because they are under the "fostering care of a committee who feel the importance of their trust, and who discharge their duty with ability and fidelity. At all meetings of the school committee the members are usually present; it is seldom that any of them are absent."<sup>33</sup> A few years later, however, in both 1846 and 1849, the chairman of the committee, in the examination of the schools, found himself unaccompanied in his work by any of his associates.<sup>34</sup> Allegheny City similarly found one half of the members of its inspection committee not giving "any attention to the matter."<sup>35</sup> Detroit took interesting action in this regard; in 1842 the Michigan legislature enacted that "every person elected to the office of school inspector who without sufficient cause shall neglect or refuse to serve shall forfeit to the board of education for the use of the library the sum of ten dollars . . . *Provided*, no person shall be compelled to serve two terms successively."<sup>36</sup> The law further

<sup>31</sup> New York, *District School Journal of the State*, Vol. 3, No. 9, p. 87, March, 1843.

<sup>32</sup> American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 73-74, 1844.

<sup>33</sup> Providence, *Report, Committee of City Council on the Expediency of a New Organization of the Public Schools*, p. 3, 1837.

<sup>34</sup> Boston, *Report, Annual Visiting Committee of Public Schools*, p. 5, 1846; *Report, Committee on Examination of Public Schools*, pp. 3-5, 1849.

<sup>35</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 20, pp. 356-357, May, 1872.

<sup>36</sup> Michigan, *Act Relative to Free Schools in Detroit*, February 17, 1842.

provided for a five dollar fine for each offense by a member who without sufficient cause absented himself from any meeting of the board. The rules of the board organized under this law, after listing in detail the duties of the board and its committees, stipulated that a fine not exceeding five dollars, at the discretion of the chair, be imposed upon any member neglecting to "perform any duty required by the preceding regulations as a committeeman or otherwise or who shall be absent from any regular or from two successive special meetings of the board."<sup>37</sup> Whether or not these provisions were enforced is not known. Of Springfield it was recorded: "several gentlemen are nominated and chosen, without asking whether they are able or willing to do the duties of the office; the consequence is that the committee generally consists of but two or three live members."<sup>38</sup> A similar practice may have existed in other cities. In fairness to the committeemen it could probably be said of them in general that while they "miserably failed in their whole duty," this was "rather from lack of boldness and a full appreciation of their opportunities and responsibilities than from indifference, inattention, or want of knowledge as to the needs of the city and its schools, or desire for their reform. They have contented themselves with feebly pointing the way."<sup>39</sup> These weaknesses on the part of boards of education or school committees, which in themselves were potent factors demanding the establishment of the superintendency, must be borne in mind while a study is made of the specific weaknesses or inabilities which the boards in general felt and the arguments they advanced for the establishment of the office. Granted that members of the boards of education or school committees "must on the common principles of human nature, be supposed to be made willing to hold this office by every variety of motive, from the highest and purest love of usefulness down to a mere personal purpose

<sup>37</sup> Detroit, *Rules and Regulations, Board of Education*, n. p. 1842.

<sup>38</sup> Springfield, *Gazette*, March 30, 1842.

<sup>39</sup> Springfield, *Daily Republican*, November 29, 1864.

of coining its privileges into dollars and cents,"<sup>40</sup> the causes advanced for the establishment of the superintendency in cities where a *public* school system existed prior to the superintendency will now be presented.

In Washington the proposed superintendent was to care for "everything pertaining to the selection of books, maps, apparatus, etc.; the improvements in the erection of school-houses; school furniture; in securing uniformity in the methods of instruction and exhibiting the best modes of teaching; encouraging regular attendance on the part of teachers and pupils; advising with the former in cases of difficulty, and in stimulating the latter to increased diligence in study; exciting a deeper interest in the cause of education in the minds of parents and citizens; and by frequent lectures to the pupils on moral and scientific subjects, many needless outlays might be avoided, and an amount of benefit realized which would greatly outweigh the apparent increased expenditure."<sup>41</sup> Concerning all these things it may be assumed that a need of change was felt in the existing methods of handling them. Years later in the same city there was a "lack of simplicity of organization, uniform vigor and efficiency of administration and instruction."<sup>42</sup>

Providence is worthy of special note by reason of the early date of the following proposal. In this city it was suggested that the superintendent "might carefully survey the whole ground, and understand from time to time its actual condition. It should be the duty of such an officer to have a knowledge of all the children in the city, especially those of the poorer classes. It would be within the sphere of his influence to lead the minds of parents and guardians to a more comprehensive sense of their duty. It should be his province to confer with the teachers, and to submit to the school committee a quarterly report, exhibiting the condi-

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<sup>40</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 7, pp. 309-310, October 15, 1845.

<sup>41</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 7-8, 1854.

<sup>42</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, pp. 130-132, 1868.

tions of the schools and all such matters relating to the general subject as its importance would suggest."<sup>43</sup>

Several months prior to the appearance of the Providence report referred to above, Mayor Kaye, of Louisville, in a communication to council stated:

"It appears to me that the present mode or system of supervision by a board of trustees might be improved. The mayor for the time being is the chairman of the board and the trite remark, 'What is everyone's business is no one's business,' might with propriety be applied to this board, which is evinced by the great trouble always incurred in getting a quorum together to do business. It has been suggested to me that a general school visitor should be appointed to visit all the schools weekly and to make monthly reports to the council. I have been creditably informed that our public schools, particularly the lower ones, are filled with the children of aliens who are for the most part able to pay the tuition fees, but do not—neither do they pay any taxes or contribute in the least to our city government. I do not wish to be understood as wishing to exclude any child from school on account of the poverty of the parents—I wish this matter investigated by the agent as suggested above and all who are able to pay ought to do so."<sup>44</sup>

For the last of the complete statements as to why a superintendent should be elected, the report of a Boston subcommittee deserves mention for its completeness and conciseness. The subcommittee unanimously agreed:

"There is now no one whose duty it is to find the best and most economical plans for schoolhouses, their ventilation and warming, and their apparatus, seats, desks, and other furniture.

"There is no one to look out for the best teacher, when a vacancy occurs, or in preparation for a vacancy.

"There is no one to find out what is the most successful teaching in all the schools, and to point it out for the benefit of all; or to aid, advise or coöperate with any teacher who is pursuing, or who may wish to pursue, an improved but untried plan of instruction and discipline.

"There is no one to make, from the wisdom of the most experienced, suggestions to those who are aiming at perfection; to know, by comparison, the deficiencies of teachers, and to point out the means of supplying them.

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<sup>43</sup> Providence, *Report, Committee of City Council on the Expediency of a New Organization of the Public Schools*, pp. 14-15, 1837.

<sup>44</sup> Louisville, *Journal of the Mayor and Council*, May 8, 1837.

"There is no one to see that proper and sufficient philosophical apparatus is supplied, and that it is properly and economically made, used and kept.

"There is no one whose special duty it is to see whether the best course of studies is pursued, or to suggest improvement from the experience of the best schools elsewhere.

"There is no one to see whether the schools are adapted to the population, and all classes of children brought into them.

"There is no one to see that repairs are immediately made and supplies furnished, when necessary.

"There is no one to see that all important business is duly brought before the meetings of the board.

"There is no one to supervise the transfer of children from school to school, and from one set of schools to another.

"There is no one to oversee the organization of new schools.

"There is no one to collect documents appertaining to the Boston and other analogous schools, and to give full information in regard to them.

"There is no one to instruct strangers in regard to them.

"There is no one to say what libraries should be in the schools, for teachers or pupils.

"There is now no individual or body to exercise the complete supervision of the schools which is needed, or to examine them as thoroughly as they require."<sup>45</sup>

In the general treatment of the needs of the schools the meetings of the board of education should first be considered. Much has already been said in regard to these meetings, but a few additional statements may add to the completeness of the picture.

In Philadelphia the board was much taken up with "tedious discussion," which due to the absence of reliable information, failed to lead to satisfactory adjustments.<sup>46</sup> The New York board found itself handicapped in its financial action for want of information on the condition and management of the schools.<sup>47</sup> It was the experience of the St. Louis board of education "that scarcely any subject or proposi-

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<sup>45</sup> Boston, *Annual Report, School Committee*, pp. 117-121, 1847.

<sup>46</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 22-23, 1881.

<sup>47</sup> New York, *Annual Report, County and City Board of Education*, p. 13, 1849.

tion comes before the board at their meetings on which the members of the board are prepared to act promptly or advisedly—that the interim between its meetings will not afford sufficient time with their limited means of information to enable committees to report satisfactorily or the board to legislate correctly.”<sup>48</sup> The committee of the city council on public schools in Brooklyn in 1847 expressed the hope that with the appointment of a superintendent there would occur more efficient direction of the activities of the board of education. The dangers involved in administering a school system without the aid of a superintendent were expressed as follows: “We run a serious risk of having incompetent supervisors and a divided responsibility, as it must be in such a case, which amounts generally to neglect. We have always to apprehend either this, or worse, that clothed with a little brief authority and almost necessarily totally ignorant of their duties, they will legislate to the serious injury of all concerned.”<sup>49</sup> A final glance at school committee meetings before the establishment of the superintendency may be had from the statement of Thomas Dorr that “the labors of the Superintendent have put a new face upon our business meetings. The generalities with which we were before necessarily occupied, from the imperfect acquaintance of any one individual with all the schools, have given place in a good measure to details and specifications,” so that the committee can now act “understandingly and deliberately.”<sup>50</sup> He further stated that “at the general meetings there was some member present who knew more or less concerning one or more of the schools and seldom or never one who had anything beyond a general and indefinite knowledge of any considerable portion of them. When the members from a district had reported that their schools were

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<sup>48</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 2, 1846.

<sup>49</sup> Brooklyn, *Report, City Council Committee on Public Schools*, pp. 9-10, 1847.

<sup>50</sup> Providence, *Annual Report, School Committee*, 1841.

'in their usual good order and condition,' there was no one to doubt or contradict the announcement."<sup>51</sup>

From materials already presented it is evident that there was a lack of unity in the schools. They varied widely from district to district in every conceivable way, according to the individual director or directors of each small unit. With such a large group of untrained supervisors, standards for making judgments did not function or even exist for any large unit. The *Daily Republic* of Springfield, Ohio, stated that the schools "can never have efficiency, thoroughness, perfect unity and completeness of action, and the highest success . . . until they are *made a unity*, with one competent mind to conduct, to manage, to *control* the whole."<sup>52</sup> A somewhat similar idea is contained in the statement that the school committee lacked a distinct personality and that "the old adage that 'corporations have no souls' affirms a truth not the less strongly with reference to the intellectual than it does in regard to the moral and spiritual."<sup>53</sup> There was thus a want of continued effort for improvement, of unity of idea, positive method and directing power over the whole. The school committee was characterized by Charles Francis Adams as being "spasmodic, lumbering, changeable, and incapable of sustained effort necessary to carry out an enlightened policy."<sup>54</sup> This can well be understood from the statement that "petty jealousies and neighborhood quarrels divided the town and set district in opposition to district."<sup>55</sup>

It is fitting to mention at this point the Akron school law, passed by the Ohio legislature in 1847, which placed the educational interests of the city under a single board. Legislation passed at a later date in Ohio and in many other

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, New Series, Vol. 7, p. 57, February, 1866.

<sup>53</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, pp. 118-119, 1884.

<sup>54</sup> Quoted in Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, p. 18, 1879.

<sup>55</sup> Tower, J., *Springfield, Present and Prospective*, pp. 33-34.

states, dealing with the administration of city school systems, was quite similar to the Akron law. Dr. Reisner considers the law a "landmark in the development of city school administration."<sup>56</sup> Philbrick regards greater centralization, exemplified "along the line of application of the so-called Akron school law," as a "tendency in the direction of progress and improvement."<sup>57</sup> Certainly the principles of the Akron school law, wherever adopted, were a potent force favoring the establishment of a virile superintendency. However, such legislation did not always cause the breakdown of localism, for members of the board of education elected at large at times districted the city and continued practices as harmful, or almost as harmful, as those which had existed previously.

During all this period cities were growing. It is unnecessary to present evidence to substantiate that statement. As they grew, the task of providing schools became greater, and a mere increase in the size of the board, as was so often the case, was at best a makeshift solution of the problem. The results of enlarging the board were not the best that were anticipated generally, and there was a fear that the schools would rapidly deteriorate as a result of the languishing of effort on the part of the directors as they came to recognize the helplessness of their situation. To their increasing task were added the duties resulting from the "improvements of all departments of education, which form so marked a feature of the present day."<sup>58</sup> For example, new subjects were being added, and these were more difficult than arithmetic and spelling for the untrained committeeman to supervise; teachers were employing different methods; compulsory attendance was being contemplated; and systematic plans of classification and promotion were under consideration. The situation was much changed from the time when each teacher ran the school pretty much to suit his own inclinations.

<sup>56</sup> Reisner, E. H., *Nationalism and Education since 1789*, pp. 449-450.

<sup>57</sup> Philbrick, J. D., *City School Systems in the United States*, p. 19.

<sup>58</sup> Wilmington, *Daily Commercial*, March 30, 1871.



Before the superintendency was established one of the outstanding defects was the "want of any localizing of responsibility."<sup>59</sup> The committee on schools in Detroit held that "even in the ordinary affairs of life when the association of numbers is required, convenience has dictated the necessity, and experience has proved the utility of placing the executive power, under various restrictions, in the hands of a single individual, who shall be responsible for its exercise."<sup>60</sup> In Boston it was also felt that with *one man* "before the eyes of the public, regularly reporting everything that he does under his own name, and liable to lose his livelihood if he goes wrong,"<sup>61</sup> there would not be so great an opportunity for abuses to pass undetected and unremoved as under the school committee system alone.

It is of interest to note that the modern organization of industry, with a board of directors and executives, while in one sense not a cause for the establishment of the superintendency, furnished a splendid analogy to a system of schools, an analogy which was brought out a number of times in school committee reports, periodicals, and addresses.<sup>62</sup> It must have been, through this means, a potent force "in securing attention to the system and securing its adoption."<sup>63</sup> Very rarely were other analogous situations presented. One which was used in Detroit suggested that the people, if they wished to perceive how well the schools were being managed without a superintendent,

<sup>59</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 361, 1874.

<sup>60</sup> Detroit, "Report of Committee on Schools," *Annual Report, Board of Education*, n. p. 1863.

<sup>61</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 7, pp. 309-310, October 15, 1845.

<sup>62</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, n. p., 1863; Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 4-5, 1855; Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 62-63, 1864; Rhode Island, *School Report*, pp. 15-17, 1865; pp. 49-51, 1874; Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, Vol. 7, pp. 35-38, February, 1866; American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 25-26, 1877; p. 106, 1880; pp. 126-127, 1883; pp. 69-71, 1885; National Education Association, Department of Superintendence, *Proceedings*, United States Bureau of Education, Circular of Information, No. 4, pp. 15-16, 1884.

<sup>63</sup> Martin, G. H., *The Evolution of the Massachusetts Public School System*, p. 220.

should imagine the commandship of the army being in the hands of a committee of the Senate during the Civil War.<sup>64</sup>

The influence of European educational administration on the development of the city superintendency deserves consideration, although no claim is made here that the city superintendency was patterned after any European school office; however, it is not to be denied that the emphasis laid on the supervision of schools in Europe in early education reports helped to create a favorable feeling toward supervision and aided considerably in the development which followed. The inspection and supervision of the Prussian schools was the feature which, in 1833, above all others, struck Cousin, the French philosopher, most favorably.<sup>65</sup> That conditions in Europe were at times brought before the board of education is evinced by the report of the committee on reform in the public schools in Baltimore in 1847; where after urging the establishment of the superintendency, it was pointed out that "this feature of the public school system is not peculiar to this country; it had its origin in Europe in some parts of which the very best systems of public education exist."<sup>66</sup> Again, later, we find that Professor Camp, of Connecticut, in discussing which course the superintendency should take in its development urged that the business of the superintendent should be based on the idea of the "English system of judging by the results produced; as they withhold grants to schools, that, having received them do not show good results."<sup>67</sup> Such specific statements mean little, however, in comparison with the generally unrecognized power contained in the wide dissemination of the thought that where the best school systems existed, there, too, could be found the highest type of supervision.

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<sup>64</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, n. p. 1863.

<sup>65</sup> *A History of Education in the State of Ohio*, Centennial Volume, p. 351, 1876.

<sup>66</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 27, 1847.

<sup>67</sup> American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 11-27, 1869.

Another result which those desiring the creation of the superintendency looked for was a renewed interest in the schools on the part of parents. The elimination of the lack of parental interest such as existed in Pennsylvania, for example, where the parents "elect their directors, pay their school tax, and then leave the subject entirely in the hands of their agents,"<sup>68</sup> was desired. In Boston it was hoped not only that the superintendent would by his direct acts quicken the interest of the parents but also that with his appointment a different concept of the work of the board of education might be advanced which would insure a feeling that examination of the schools by the parents was necessary. This was contrary to the condition then existing, under which the board of education was supposed to do the work but, failing to do so, and at the same time not making the parents cognizant of a parent's responsibility, actually protected and perpetuated defects.<sup>69</sup> While patrons needed "to be stimulated and enlightened, and a deeper public interest in the schools" needed to be incited, this could not well be accomplished while the teacher was "left plodding in the ruts of dull routine."<sup>70</sup>

This centers attention on the problems concerning the teacher which contributed to the establishment of the superintendency. The education and vocations of most members of boards of education did not fit them to become "critical judges of the acquirements and professional skill of teachers, and gross carelessness in the employment of instructors for the schools became a most serious and deplorable evil."<sup>71</sup> The evils of the situation can be realized more fully when it is noted that teachers frequently viewed their work as a temporary occupation, that their salaries and opportunities were meager, and that there was a lack

<sup>68</sup> Pennsylvania, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Common Schools*, p. 16, 1840.

<sup>69</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 7, p. 309, October 15, 1845.

<sup>70</sup> Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, New Series, Vol. 8, pp. 459-460, December, 1867.

<sup>71</sup> Pennsylvania, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Common Schools*, p. 13, 1857.

of the study of the art of instruction. The schools consequently were consigned to the crippling influence of endless and misdirected experiment.<sup>72</sup> In Springfield supervision solely in the hands of the school committee was deplored because of the fear that it would mean placing the schools under teachers of perhaps "doubtful qualifications and little experience" and then letting them "go on as best they may in a seeming reliance upon some self-regulating principle inherent in the system," hoping<sup>73</sup> for success. It was even suggested that "the difficulty of obtaining efficient and well trained teachers has brought about the natural result that school supervision plays an important rôle in the United States."<sup>74</sup> Wilmington was troubled for a number of years before the establishment of the superintendency with poor scholarship on the part of the teachers.<sup>75</sup> To increase the difficulty was the recognition of the fact that "the man who can do many things fairly well sinks beneath the surface, while the man who can do any one thing very well is foremost in the struggle for existence."<sup>76</sup>

Moreover, supervision was coming to be recognized as a difficult and delicate task. An analogy with the management of a manufacturing establishment is both false and deceptive. While there is considerable uniformity in the work in an industry and efficient supervision is consequently relatively easy,

"A teacher, on the other hand, who deserves the name, is to some extent, an original; that is to say, he views and explains subjects in a way peculiar to himself and the natural working of his own mind . . . To require him to surrender his individuality, and to do his work after some favorite method of ours, is easy, and as preposterous as easy. To see that he does his work well, whatever be the mode, or if he does it ill, to show him where the defect is, and how to remedy it, and yet allow him the freedom so essential—requires more sound-

<sup>72</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 12-13, 1880.

<sup>73</sup> Springfield, *Annual Report, School Committee*, n. p., 1842.

<sup>74</sup> Osterberg, E., (Sweden), "Observations Concerning American Education," United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, Vol. 1, p. 629, 1892-93.

<sup>75</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 43, 1876-77.

<sup>76</sup> American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, pp. 69-71, 1885.

ness of judgment, and delicacy of discrimination than are always at command."<sup>77</sup>

In addition to these factors, the Philadelphia board of education wanted an agent through whom it might communicate its thought and action intelligently to the teachers and also a representative of the teachers to bring their "clear, definite judgment" before the board.<sup>78</sup> The commissioner of public schools in Rhode Island felt that "teachers need some breakwater of this sort to protect them from the assaults of ignorant parents in their efforts to introduce necessary reforms."<sup>79</sup> A head was needed to enforce the rules and regulations for the conduct of the schools. This concerned other aspects of the service than the teachers, but frequently was directly aimed at them because they were at times not punctual or professional in other ways. Finally an interesting view of the superintendent and his relation to the teachers appears in a statement by the Philadelphia correspondent of the *New York School Journal and Educational Directory* when, after attacking Philadelphia for the low salaries paid, he writes, "It may be thought that it will compensate the teachers for low salaries to find that they have no superintendents to measure their work, and see if it is well done—or done at all."<sup>80</sup>

Expectations of the superintendent's working in direct relation to the pupils in a number of capacities is found in various places. Wilmington needed for its schools an officer with the capacity and power to organize them thoroughly and grade them properly.<sup>81</sup> In Chicago no system of promotion existed and no registers were kept, with the result that it was impossible to tell what pupils did or did not belong to specified schools except as they were seen in actual attendance.<sup>82</sup> The examining committee in Boston con-

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<sup>77</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 9-10, 1857.

<sup>78</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 20-23, 1881.

<sup>79</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, pp. 12-13, 1863.

<sup>80</sup> New York, *School Journal and Educational Directory*, Vol. 6, p. 6, November 3, 1877.

<sup>81</sup> Wilmington, *Daily Commercial*, October 25, 1870.

<sup>82</sup> Andreas, A. T., *History of Chicago*, Vol. 1, pp. 214-215.

ducted the examinations at "railroad speed," not taking into account "a thousand local and temporary causes which, on any given day, may so affect the school as to give a transient visitor an utterly erroneous idea as to its condition."<sup>83</sup> Here, also, the primary schools "in the things taught and the mode of instruction" were not related to the grammar schools.<sup>84</sup> Philadelphia had a similar lack of harmony among its schools, for the time when the number of schools, was sufficiently small that they could understand each other's wants, aims, and methods was "far in the past."<sup>85</sup> In Pittsburgh, the city superintendency was urged "to render symmetrical the grades of the different schools, and also to get the high school to work in harmony with the ward schools, which it was not now doing; also to devise means whereby all the children of the city might be made to attend school."<sup>86</sup> Rochester experienced troubles of a like nature for there it was moved that the superintendent should devote his time exclusively "to the classification and instruction of the children in the several schools."<sup>87</sup>

Denver desired a superintendent to "classify and control the various branches of learning,"<sup>88</sup> but Philadelphia stood preëminent in the matter of curriculum problems demanding solution. In the latter case a satisfactory course of study could not be established for, after being carefully rewritten, it was interpreted in a "hundred ways," due "to the fact that language is not sufficiently exact to convey accurately to all minds the precise direction and purpose intended by the words employed."<sup>89</sup>

Akin to curriculum problems is the matter of textbooks. The securing of uniformity of textbooks was to be a problem of a number of proposed superintendents. In Balti-

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<sup>83</sup> Boston, *Report, Committee on the Examination of the Public Schools*, pp. 5-12, 1848.

<sup>84</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 40*, pp. 62-63, 1847.

<sup>85</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 11-12, 1880.

<sup>86</sup> Pittsburgh, *Gazette*, March 3, 1868.

<sup>87</sup> Rochester, *Daily Democrat*, July 7, 18'1.

<sup>88</sup> Denver, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 5, 1871.

<sup>89</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 20-23, 1881.

more it was felt that neither the "high character of authors and publishers" nor the influence of friends and agents should operate in the introduction of books but rather that their advantages and disadvantages should be "carefully scrutinized" by a "single person, competent to the duty, and who shall be held responsible for his action."<sup>90</sup>

Economy was frequently advanced as an argument for the establishment of the superintendency. In most cases there was the thought, not of spending fewer dollars, but rather of securing better service for the money being spent. Dr. Sears wrote in this connection: "Without superintendence the waste is many times greater than the cost of furnishing it. The expenditures of our public schools consume a great part of our revenues and it is well known that nearly one half of the school money is expended to little purpose."<sup>91</sup> There were cases where it was expected that actual dollars would be saved. These in general were in cities in which the school committee members were drawing annually a sum sufficient to pay a superintendent. This was the situation in Worcester, when in 1855, in the annual report, the school committee, speaking of the proposed superintendent, stated that "in the construction and furnishing of a single schoolhouse he would save to the city more than enough"<sup>92</sup> to double the saving made as a result of paying no members of the school committee or the secretary. The following year the mayor said, "In the construction and fitting up of schoolhouses, in the supplies for schools, in contingent expenses, I apprehend he will annually save to the city more than double the amount of his salary."<sup>93</sup> Interestingly, some years later the school committee reported that order, discipline, success, and efficiency "had been in so many ways promoted" that at the same

<sup>90</sup> Baltimore, "Report of Committee on Reform in the Public Schools." *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 30, 1847.

<sup>91</sup> Sears, B., "Fifty Years of Educational Progress." *American Institute of Instruction, Lectures*, p. 106, 1880.

<sup>92</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 11-15, 1855.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 4-5, 1856.

cost the office could be considered a "wise and true economy"; but such consideration was unnecessary for his care "actually lessened the cost per scholar, which, even with his own salary added, and all enhanced prices incident to the war, has not reached the yearly average before the office was instituted."<sup>94</sup>

While economy was thought of at times in relation to the business activities of the board of education, it can be said fairly that educational activities caused many more demands for a superintendent than did business activities. This is true in spite of the fact that these two types of activities were not so clearly separated in the thirties or forties as they came to be toward the close of the century. There may be listed, however, many business activities which it was expected that the superintendent would assume. The mayor of Boston expected him to see that the money raised was wisely expended and that new school-houses combined all modern improvements.<sup>95</sup> In Buffalo the superintendent was to look after the purchase and sawing of firewood, additions to schoolhouses, and the collection of entrance fees. He was also to make all necessary purchases for the schools, not only because he could do so on better terms than could the teachers but also because he would thus relieve the teachers so that they could devote their time and attention more exclusively to the duties for which they were employed.<sup>96</sup>

Finally, in cities in which a public school system had been established before the superintendency was under consideration, certain rather specific conditions and factors should be mentioned. Boston wanted a "means of producing a mutual understanding between this Board and the City Council, in matters relating to the erection and alteration of buildings and other similar practical questions involving the expenditure of money, so that the resources of the

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17, 1865.

<sup>95</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 1*, pp. 10-11, 18'6.

<sup>96</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, Common Council*, March 18, 1841 and March 23, 1841.



city may not be wasted by conflicting plans, leading to the undoing by one Board of what has been done by the other."<sup>97</sup> Leaders in education, such as Horace Mann<sup>98</sup> and Henry Barnard,<sup>99</sup> exerted a powerful influence, as did also the lesser leaders, such as acting visitors, acting managers, state superintendents as, for instance, Wickersham in Pennsylvania and others interested in educational advancement although they held no official position. The National Teachers' Association in 1863 accepted as a measure to be encouraged and advocated by the association "the appointment of superintendents of public instruction in all states, counties, cities, and important towns."<sup>100</sup> Springfield looked for more consideration and favor of the schools when they should take on a higher character among the other municipal organizations, as the result of having a superintendent.<sup>101</sup> In Cleveland the teachers felt the need of a change from the acting manager situation, and consequently held meetings to which they invited the board of education and members of the city council for the purpose of discussing the "new doctrine of school supervision."<sup>102</sup> Under the leadership of Emerson E. White, of the Brownell Street Grammar School, they convinced the people of the expediency of the change and secured its introduction.

Reports were frequently exchanged and visits of the school committee or its representatives to other cities had much influence. This is true in spite of the accusation by Rev. James Fraser that the visits were a farce and that the committees who were "charmed," they said, "with what they had seen," actually saw only programs staged in their

<sup>97</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 23*, pp. 2-2, 1851.

<sup>98</sup> Wightman, J. M., *Annals of the Boston Primary School Committee*, pp. 177-179; Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, n. p. 1842.

<sup>99</sup> Barnard, H., *The Old Hartford Grammar School*, pp. 240-241; Morrison, J. C., *The Legal Status of the City School Superintendent*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>100</sup> National Teachers' Association, *Journal of Proceedings and Lectures*, p. 59, 1863.

<sup>101</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 48, 1864.

<sup>102</sup> Freese, A., *Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools*, pp. 76-77.

honor and knew "nothing more of the actual working of the school than when they came."<sup>103</sup>

Probably a sufficient number of references have been given to show clearly the influence of the press and periodicals on the development of the superintendency. Philadelphia smarted under criticism in newspapers, periodicals, and reports as early as 1867 when, in the controllers' report, it is stated that "the absence of a superintendent of schools in our city has been commented upon with marked severity by educational men, at home and abroad."<sup>104</sup> Mention should also be made of the Public Education Association in Philadelphia, an organization of the leading citizens of the city which held meetings, provided lectures on educational systems and questions, employed the newspapers, and educated the public as to the need of a superintendent.<sup>105</sup> Having succeeded in that program, the association spent many years fighting against almost insuperable difficulties to secure for the superintendent powers which rightfully should be his. Springfield wanted a man to educate the school committee, "to break through and break down the chronic impediments, who will not suffer himself to be hampered or hindered by respect for the present old fogysim. It is a revolution and reconstruction that we need in the schools of Springfield, and no half-way measures will help our difficulties at all."<sup>106</sup> Finally, an influence of much strength was the open secret that the preëminence of the schools known as the best was "attributable to the fact that the local boards having charge of the schools, while reserving to themselves all legislative functions and ultimate authority in the premises, severally employ an executive officer as superintendent, to enforce their legislation and manage all their

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<sup>103</sup> Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, New Series, Vol. 9, p. 68, February, 1868.

<sup>104</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Controllers*, pp. 13-14, 1867.

<sup>105</sup> Public Education Association, Philadelphia, *A Generation of Progress*, pp 14-15.

<sup>106</sup> Springfield, *Daily Republican*, November 16, 1864.

schools; who gives to his schools all his time, all his thought, all his culture, and puts his best life into theirs.”<sup>107</sup>

Consideration will now be given to cities where public school systems had not previously existed or where a new organization was planned. In Memphis the individual who was later the first superintendent won through his eloquence the establishment of the free public school system. He employed the teacher<sup>108</sup> and issued tickets of admission for the first school opened.<sup>109</sup> His powers were as broad as those of a present-day superintendent and, since he had power, the creating ordinance provided that he should “be held responsible for the successful progress of the schools.”<sup>110</sup> In Omaha it was felt that getting “started right is of infinite importance, not only in the selection of superintendent and teachers, but in having the schools so arranged and graded as to produce the best results. This work of arranging the schools must, to a great extent, rest with the superintendent.”<sup>111</sup> Quite similar was the feeling of the committee on teachers of the New Orleans board of education which reported: “The committee considers that the appointment of a principal teacher for the schools is of the most vital importance . . . The first step is nearly everything; a good beginning will guarantee the almost certain accomplishment of the high objective in view. A competent person to ‘launch the system’ of instruction is the first great point to be attained.”<sup>112</sup> The president of the board on the following day wrote to John A. Shaw to inform him of his election as principal of the public schools and stated: “We are about to commence a system, new in this country, and as none of us have any practical knowledge of the subject we then rely on you to start our system so that

<sup>107</sup> Harrington, H. L., “Extent, Methods, and Value of Supervision in a System of Schools.” National Education Association, *Proceedings*, pp. 245-257, 1872.

<sup>108</sup> Young, J. P., *History of Memphis*, p. 398.

<sup>109</sup> Memphis, *The Daily Eagle*, September 11, 1848.

<sup>110</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July 15, 1848.

<sup>111</sup> Omaha, *Weekly Tribune and Republican*, June 12, 1872.

<sup>112</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 13, 1841.

it may not only be eminently useful to the people of this municipality, but that its benefits may be so apparent that it may in a short time pervade the whole State."<sup>113</sup>

Nashville, after having Alfred Hume visit and study the public school systems of Cleveland, Boston, Providence, Philadelphia and Baltimore, decided to establish a public school system, and thereupon employed Joshua Pearl, former organizer of the schools of Natchez, then superintendent in Memphis, "to organize our public schools."<sup>114</sup> Similarly, in Atlanta it was to be the duty of the superintendent "to suggest the grading of the schools to the board" and to serve as the "right hand" and "chief adviser."<sup>115</sup> Two years later, the plans of this committee having developed, a newspaper reported that under "the superintendence of Professor Mallon, our public schools, soon to be organized, will ere long rank with the best in the country."<sup>116</sup> The Free School Ordinance of San Francisco provided for a board of education and a superintendent. The sponsor of this ordinance became the first superintendent, and he was instructed "to rent or otherwise obtain an adequate number of buildings for school-houses, and to fit them up for the accomodation of the public schools, to provide them with suitable furniture and fixtures and to take measures for putting the schools in operation."<sup>117</sup> Even in Providence a potent cause for the establishment of the superintendency was to carry into effect a reorganization of the schools.<sup>118</sup> Buffalo turned to the superintendency for "some general and effective system which would bring the means of education within the reach of all."<sup>119</sup> It came to the fore when

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, December 20, 1841.

<sup>114</sup> Nashville, *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, November 25, 1854.

<sup>115</sup> Atlanta, *City Council, Report, Committee on Public Schools*, pp. 7-8, November 22, 1869.

<sup>116</sup> Atlanta, *Daily New Era*, September 7, 1871.

<sup>117</sup> San Francisco, Board of Education, *Origin of the Free Public Schools of San Francisco*.

<sup>118</sup> Providence, *Journal*, April 12, 1838.

<sup>119</sup> Steele, O. G., "History of Buffalo Public Schools." Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Public Schools*, pp. 76-77, 1862.

it did because of the panic of 1837, which paralyzed the private schools of the city.

In conclusion it must be stated that the superintendency in a great number of instances was established for a year's trial, or for some other experimental period, or at least with the feeling that if it failed to achieve the hopes of its supporters it could be discontinued at any time.<sup>120</sup> As the New Orleans board stated, it was done "somewhat in ignorance on the part of the board."<sup>121</sup> This is mentioned here because it makes clear the fact that causes for the establishment of the superintendency not only are found in literature urging such a step, but also, and perhaps more honestly, are revealed in a study of the early duties of the superintendent. For a more extended consideration of causes, the reader is therefore referred to the later chapters which deal with various responsibilities of the superintendents from the establishment of the office to the end of the century.

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<sup>120</sup> For details concerning experimental attitude and instances of discontinuance see pp. 83-88.

<sup>121</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 27, 1841.

## CHAPTER IV

### FACTORS AND CONDITIONS OPPOSING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

In Boston, in 1838, a committee of the primary school committee stated that "no agent, however talented or efficient, could possibly perform the duty which is required of the gentlemen who compose this board."<sup>1</sup> From the same committee came an ironical remark to the effect that a committee of the grammar board reported that the "schools are so numerous that the ninety gentlemen who are the committee, either cannot, or *do not*, take care of them, therefore, in their opinion, they require nearly the whole time of one individual for the express purpose."<sup>2</sup> A similar thought was expressed by the president of the Detroit board of education when, after listing the demands upon members if success was to be attained by the schools, he wrote, "No one officer or committee can accomplish it, while the concurrent action of twenty inspectors may."<sup>3</sup>

Coupled with this view was the belief that the superintendency was unnecessary. Challenged by the thought of the appointment of a "city missionary of instruction" to work in the primary schools, the primary committee of Boston, in 1838, through a special committee accepted the occasion to elaborate on the work it did in connection with buildings, books, studies, and supervision. Then the special committee rather indignantly but proudly inquired whether or not "*these* are such evidence of neglect, as to require a *special* agent to increase their number or improve their character?"<sup>4</sup> That the sectional boards in Philadelphia in some cases viewed the situation in a like manner is evidenced by a resolution from the thirteenth section asking the board of controllers to reconsider its action requesting an appropriation for the salary of a superintendent. The

<sup>1</sup> Wightman, J. M., *Annals of the Boston Primary School Committee*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 10-11, 1859.

resolution stated that the sectional boards were regarded as fully competent "to take charge of the schools under their care."<sup>5</sup> Further evidence of the belief that the schools were in excellent condition and that the superintendency was unnecessary is found in the statement of a "spirited teacher" of the Philadelphia schools who, while attending a state convention, said in defense of the Philadelphia system: "Pray, sir, will you have the goodness to prove to me the necessity of adding a fifth wheel to a wagon."<sup>6</sup>

More potent in opposition to the establishment of the superintendency than either the belief that the work was too much for one man or that it was an unnecessary office was the jealousy with which the directors or trustees viewed their responsibility. They were proud of their accomplishments—in some instances justly so, in others because of the tradition of their office or because it enabled them to dispense favors among friends frequently without too much consideration of the children. The president of the board of education in Philadelphia considered the office of sectional director one of "great dignity and responsibility."<sup>7</sup> The council of Louisville, anxious to improve the schools, suggested enlarging the powers and duties of the school agent and requested the opinion of the board of school visitors. The members of this board replied that they considered such action unnecessary and inexpedient.<sup>8</sup> Another example of the fear of boards that power would escape them is to be found in some instances where the board made one of its own members superintendent. The president and eight other members of the board of school commissioners in Baltimore approved a plan asking for permission "to appoint one of their number superintendent of public

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<sup>4</sup> Wightman, J. M., *Annals of the Boston Primary School Committee*, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> Philadelphia, *Minutes, Board of Controllors*, June 9, 1868.

<sup>6</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 18, pp. 210-211, February, 1870.

<sup>7</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 14-15, 1874.

<sup>8</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of School Visitors*, May 23, 1843.

schools.”<sup>9</sup> One commissioner was opposed to the superintendency and another favored the superintendency but opposed restricting the appointment to a member of the board. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the jealous guarding of rights by directors or trustees is to examine the tenacity with which, for a long period of time after the establishment of the office of superintendent, they retained various duties which could have been much more effectively performed by a superintendent. The surrender of duties was exceedingly slow in many cities. John Swett, during his four years as superintendent in San Francisco in the last decade of the nineteenth century, reported that in only one instance was his opinion or advice asked regarding the fitness of teachers for appointment.<sup>10</sup>

Many other illustrations may be offered and are presented in the latter chapters of this study which show the development of the superintendent's power in regard to various relationships. The reader should refer to them if further detail on this point is desired.

On some occasions there was a lack of understanding or knowledge concerning the place of authority in the establishment of the superintendency. In Philadelphia the board of controllers made appeals to the city council and to the state legislature to supply the funds necessary. The only legal obstacle was the want of funds necessary. In Boston, previous to 1851, it was believed necessary to secure a special act of the Massachusetts legislature to establish the office. The step was finally taken without such act, although the character of the office and its powers were not the same as had formerly been proposed.<sup>12</sup>

The division of responsibility retarded the spread of the establishment of the office. In cities where the board of

<sup>9</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 68-70, 1845.

<sup>10</sup> Swett, J., *Public Education in California. Its Origin and Development with Personal Reminiscences of Half a Century*, p. 247.

<sup>11</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 18, p. 229, February, 1870.

<sup>12</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 16*, pp. 5-6, 1854.



education had to wait for the city council to authorize such a move a long period frequently elapsed because the city council was not in direct touch with the situation and failed to realize the need. Baltimore, whose experiences with its treasurer have been related,<sup>13</sup> is a case in point. Divided authority also hindered the development of the office, for it was difficult to get the various bodies to act in accord. In fairness to city councils, however, it should be said that they were not always to blame. It was a fault of the system. Boston was outstanding in its inability to get its various boards to work together. A committee of the city council complained of the reluctance of the grammar board to co-operate in the solution of this problem in 1850.<sup>14</sup> In 1851, when success was achieved, the action concerned only the grammar schools, for the primary committee desired no superintendent. Not until the primary committee was abolished in 1855 did the primary schools of Boston come under the influence of the superintendent.

In some instances the appointment of the superintendent was not entrusted to the board of education. In cities in which the appointing power was vested in or retained by a board other than the board of education no consistent effort could be expected for the establishment of the office, for the boards of education feared the assumption of power by some one not responsible to them. The city council frequently held the appointing power and thus hindered the spread of the office. In Washington efforts were made to secure the establishment of the office for nearly twenty years before success was attained. The chief objection there, and one which proved to be valid during the first year of the superintendency, was the "inexpediency of establishing such an office, so long as the charter of the corporation vested the appointing power in the mayor, with the advice and consent of the board of aldermen."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Ante*, pp. 15-17.

<sup>14</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 50*, pp. 3-4, 1850.

<sup>15</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, p. 60, 1870.

The lack of competent men to fill the position when created was an outstanding handicap in the rapid spread or development of the superintendency. The school committee of Springfield, having secured at the annual meeting consent to elect a superintendent, failed to do so until four months of the year had elapsed. The committee regretted this for it was desirous that the experiment should have as long and as fair a trial as possible, but the "difficulty experienced in obtaining a competent individual rendered this delay on the part of the committee unavoidable."<sup>16</sup> When the first superintendent of Worcester resigned in 1858, although the "community generally were satisfied with the experiment," no appointment was made for more than a year. The committee, writing of the delay in making the appointment, stated:

"If there could now be found a man thoroughly acquainted with the public schools; identified with the interests of education by voluntary service in its field; gifted with enthusiasm for the fairest cause to which intellectual energies can be devoted; entitled to the confidence of citizens by the integrity of his character, and to the affection of children by the purity of his life and the love he could return to them—if such a man could be persuaded to accept the office and perform its duties, the school committee would be bound by the gravest obligations of public duty, to elect him and to set him at work."<sup>17</sup>

The office was filled again in 1859 and at that time the *Daily Spy* editorially commented that, "though there have been frequent and general expressions of desire to have the office filled, it has remained vacant, chiefly for want of a suitable and competent candidate who would command the hearty and cordial coöperation of his associates in the care of the schools."<sup>18</sup> The Denver board of education received and accepted an application for the situation of "principal and superintendent of all the public schools" and adopted a preamble explaining that the board had "long been in quest of some suitable person of requisite qualifications and ex-

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<sup>16</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 1-5, 1841.

<sup>17</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 12-13, 1858.

<sup>18</sup> Worcester, *Daily Spy*, April 8, 1859.

perience"<sup>19</sup> to fill position. Charles Francis Adams is quoted as saying, in a report concerning Quincy, that after authority to appoint a superintendent had been secured "now the first serious difficulty presented itself in the practical selection of a superintendent; for it is a noticeable fact that large and costly as the common school system of this country is, and greatly as it stands in need of intelligent direction, not a single step has yet been taken towards giving it such a direction through an educated superintendency."<sup>20</sup>

The Rochester board of education had difficulty also in securing a competent man to head its schools. After I. F. Mack had served five years, the board appointed three different persons within two years "in the endeavor to fill his place, but with indifferent success."<sup>21</sup> The people were then so dissatisfied with the frequent changes that a law was enacted taking the power of appointment from the board and making the office elective.<sup>22</sup> The commissioner of education in Rhode Island, writing concerning the securing of good superintendents, said:

"The highest grade of business ability is ready for the service, the best education and the broadest culture are ready to do their part, but the person who has a practical knowledge both of the theory and of the art of teaching, and is prepared to enter into the work of inspection and direction in detail, is rarely to be found. It is true that the number of such persons is small, and hence that people are not wholly to blame for a failure to secure their services."<sup>23</sup>

This absence of competent men in many cities led to the development of a fear of the results of such action. A committee of the Cincinnati board of trustees and visitors urged "mature deliberation" before adopting the idea and that, if then adopted, "every precaution be resorted to, to prevent abuse, or an improper appointment. For, should such an appointment be injudiciously made, we fear the

<sup>19</sup> Denver, District No. 1, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 5, 1871.

<sup>20</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 15-18, 1879.

<sup>21</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 35, 1863.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, pp. 85-87, 1877.

consequences would be disastrous to our now prosperous schools."<sup>24</sup> While Washington lacked "the best indication of the real vitality of a school system," it was mentioned that success of this branch of the system would depend on "the intelligence, fidelity and discretion of the officer, and on such a specification of duties as will relieve the faithful and intelligent teacher from untimely and vexatious interference."<sup>25</sup> In Pittsburgh fear and favoritism may have worked hand in hand, for a member of the board from the Second Ward stated that "some were opposed to a city superintendent *in toto*; some were in favor of it if they could have their man elected; while others were in favor of electing such as they could now, and doing better in the future if they could."<sup>26</sup> The school committee of Springfield was conservative in urging the establishment of the office and stated that "whenever a suitable person has been employed, we believe it has uniformly proved successful."<sup>27</sup> In the same city the *Daily Republican* hoped, with "doubt and misgiving,"<sup>28</sup> that a true educator and a "live man" would be elected superintendent.

Closely related to the jealousy of responsibility of the members of boards of education was the cry of "one man power." This term often served to prevent the establishment of the office and even more prevented its proper and rapid development. It was "the boggy with which it is hoped to frighten the press and the people from their determination to reclaim the schools from the politicians, the wire-pullers, and the local cliques which now too often have them in charge."<sup>29</sup> With a superintendent, it was said, "there may be favoritism, and management in the choice of masters to answer a particular purpose, and in the introductions of books to help somebody's pocket, and so forth

<sup>24</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, p. 18, 1847.

<sup>25</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 132, 1868.

<sup>26</sup> Pittsburgh, *Gazette*, March 3, 1868.

<sup>27</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 8-9, 1862.

<sup>28</sup> Springfield, *Daily Republican*, November 16, 1864.

<sup>29</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 19, pp. 406-408, April, 1900.

and so forth."<sup>30</sup> The Boston examining committee aptly replied that "*there may be all this now.*"<sup>31</sup>

The ignorance or wrong impression of the character of the work to be done was responsible for frequent objections to employing a superintendent.<sup>32</sup> So also was the feeling that the establishment of the office would mean little. A letter to the editor of the *Jersey City Daily Telegraph* expressed this feeling strongly when, in consideration of the proposal to establish the superintendency, it stated that such a procedure "may be well enough so far as it goes, but he will probably have the exquisite pleasure of standing with his thumb in his mouth with no power or authority except the unenviable privilege of delicately hinting of improvements or defects, very much as 'the township school committee' do nowadays. I have had some little experience in this office and have felt very much like a bird that has a strong impulse to fly but is unprovided with wings."<sup>33</sup> Incidentally the editor found the opinion so well in agreement with his views that he considered it unnecessary to make the remarks editorially which he had planned.

There can be little doubt that the establishment of the superintendency was opposed by many in the interest of saving money. It is probable that arguments other than the need of economy were advanced frequently when economy was the real basis of opposition. The avoidance of the expenditure involved, although not generally mentioned, was a particularly potent argument when the appointment or authority to appoint was in hands other than those of the individuals most directly concerned with the schools, for then the necessity of having a superintendent was less appreciated. The fact that voluntary service had brought the schools in most instances to whatever their present condition might be, made any change, particularly one involving

<sup>30</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 7, pp. 309-310, October 15, 1845.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Prince, J. T., "Duties of School Superintendents." *Education*, Vol. 4, pp. 412-413, March, 1884.

<sup>33</sup> *Jersey City, Telegraph*, December 19, 1850.

money, appear unwarranted. When the superintendency was discontinued in Springfield in 1842 it was because the taxpayers "were willing to bank upon their children's ignorance in order to pocket a few shillings of tax money."<sup>84</sup> A writer for the *Gazette* characterized the discontinuance as being due to "fear lest we shall act the part of the prodigal, and waste all the substance of the town on means of riotous living for the schools."<sup>85</sup> This writer also mentions that some consider the office unnecessary, either because they do not know, or "have not reflected" upon what the services are. A member of the board of education in Rochester, in urging the control of the schools by mechanics and laboring men rather than by lawyers, doctors, and other professional men, thought that under such control "less money would be squandered for useless objects, such as \$900 a year for a superintendent and the payments of certain sums by a former board for the examination of teachers."<sup>86</sup> A "teacher" at the same date, suggested that the system adopted by the board "needs not much trial" to "secure its abandonment at once" for "about 8 per cent, or more than \$1,000, is annually expended for the payment of salaries of superintendent and expenses, which if added to the tuition fund would place the schools on a sure foundation and free them from many embarrassments."<sup>87</sup> Arguments of this general type were most potent in securing the abandonment of the office where it had been secured, and it is consequently a safe inference that the desire to save money was an obstacle to the spread of the idea.

"No doubt excessive decentralization of administration has been one of the chief obstacles to improvement in every department of our free school system,"<sup>88</sup> wrote Philbrick. No exception to this in regard to the superintendency need

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<sup>84</sup> Green, M. A., *Springfield, 1836-1886. History of Town and City*, pp. 463-464.

<sup>85</sup> Springfield, *Gazette*, March 30, 1842.

<sup>86</sup> Rochester, *Daily Democrat*, June 12, 1848.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> Philbrick, J. D., *City School Systems in the United States*, p. 19.

be made. There were those, however, who favored such extreme decentralization. Replying to a questionnaire sent out by the committee on reform in the Baltimore public schools in 1847, Hon. Willard Hall, of Wilmington, stated concerning the superintendency that the development of the common schools "must be left to the people whose children are educated in them, and that they must learn by actual experiment how to form good schools . . . This must be a slow process; is not everything good brought about by slow process? A mushroom grows in a night, and how many educational improvements are mushrooms?"<sup>39</sup> He expressed the further belief that "it was best to throw the whole burden upon the people, giving them nothing to depend upon but their own judgment, faithfulness, and diligence, and leave them to the responsibility and consequences . . . Allow the people any way to escape the burden and throw off the responsibility of the schools, and they will do it. If it be desired that an individual make the most of himself, the best course is to put him to shift for himself, with no dependence but upon his own ability and effort. The principle holds true of men in communities."<sup>40</sup>

The idea of the superintendency in a number of instances met opposition from teachers and principals. Teachers often feared supervision and, in light of the type of supervision furnished, their fear was at times warranted. They were not desirous of having one better trained than the local committeeman or one not so well known as the principal of the school observe and criticize their work, but more often there was the just fear that some one would be elected to the superintendency who was inferior to the teachers in professional skill and attainments, or one who would enforce an antiquated routine which was decidedly out of place. A "sensitive apprehension on the part of teachers, that they

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<sup>39</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 35-36, 1847.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

may fall into bad hands"<sup>41</sup> was an objection worthy of consideration. At times the teachers had to be called upon by the board of education to "fulfill promptly all the regulations of the superintendent; and if they have any cause of complaint . . . they shall offer it before this board."<sup>42</sup> While teachers did not all comply with the regulation, often due to their feeling of responsibility to sectional directors, as the directors came to be in accord with the superintendency the teachers followed. The difficulties encountered by superintendents in dealing with passive opposition on the part of teachers is illustrated in the following conversation:

"I should like to see your classes in natural science," said a visitor to one of the grammar masters at that time. 'We do not have any classes in natural science,' said the master. 'Oh, but I see that natural science is set down in your course of study,' returned the visitor. 'That is true,' replied the master. 'We allow our superintendent to keep it there for ornamental purposes, but we do not pretend to do anything with it in the schools.'<sup>43</sup>

More vigorous opposition was offered by the principals, for they had more to lose; in some cases they had been superintendents in a real sense and had no assurance that a superintendent would allow them the desired responsibility, not to speak of the license, that they had at times enjoyed at the hands of the sectional directors. In New Orleans the board censored a principal for refusing to obey the superintendent and open his schools on February 22.<sup>44</sup> Other cases of disagreement will be presented in the chapters dealing with the various responsibilities of the superintendent. The fight for power was a long one in many cities and the feeling was frequently intense. An interesting case of opposition on the part of a music supervisor was presented in Louisville, where the supervisor did not recognize the superintendent's authority to point out his duty to him (the

<sup>41</sup> "Report of the Special Committee on the School Superintendency, Board of Controllers, Philadelphia." Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 18, p. 228, February, 1870.

<sup>42</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 29, 1860.

<sup>43</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 3*, pp. 18-21, 1903.

<sup>44</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 3, 1849.



supervisor) and "intended to show that he did not recognize it."<sup>45</sup> A fist fight resulted and the board of trustees regretted that the superintendent allowed himself to resort to violence.

The report<sup>46</sup> of a special committee of the primary school committee of Boston presented arguments against the superintendency in a sufficiently different manner to warrant a summary of them here. They were: (1) "the interruption which such an agency would constantly be to the regular instruction of the schools"; (2) that it "would lead to repeated experiments of new methods of instruction, which would not be sufficiently understood, when acquired under such circumstances," and that it would be better for the schools if teachers employed poorer methods with which they were familiar than the newer and better methods; (3) that it "would lessen the respect of the pupils for their teachers, when they should find that, like themselves, they were subjects of instruction." There was also the danger that "this agent would come in conflict with the opinions and requirements of the committees of the several schools" and thus perplex the teachers, increase their labors and anxieties, and do "more harm than any good that could be effected for the schools by this measure."

Finally, in every community, there was opposition from that group of individuals which the *Philadelphia Morning Post* had in mind when it stated that the superintendent should "have the courage to meet for years a storm of vituperation from old fogies with set notions that the past is the best guide for the future and that its highways are too venerable to be submitted to the engineering of young America's leveler—intelligent progress."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees of the University and Public Schools*, January 20, 1854.

<sup>46</sup> Wightman, J. M., *Annals of the Boston Primary School Committee*, p. 180.

<sup>47</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 18, p. 232, February, 1870.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Uncertainty respecting the source of authority for the establishment of the superintendency was already mentioned.<sup>1</sup> While authority for such action finally came to be assumed by the state, in many cities the city council or the board of education had been granted control of education or of the common schools by the state without specifications as to an administrative set-up. Such grants of control were made usually before the cities were large and before education was given the recognition later accorded it. In cases where authority was thus granted, it was a debatable question as to whether the council or the board of education could proceed or whether a special act of the legislature was necessary to establish the superintendency. Further complications arose when the taxing power was in the hands of the council, and some other agency had authority to establish the office. Attention will now be given to the establishment of the superintendency, showing the wide variation in practice between states and cities and the spread of the adoption of the idea. In a following chapter the interrelationships of various bodies in determining appointment, dismissal, salary, duties, et cetera, will be considered.

Springfield, at a town meeting, appointed a committee of one from each school district to consider the subject of raising and distributing funds, "together with the appointment of a superintendent of schools."<sup>2</sup> On April 6, 1840, this committee reported a plan for distributing the funds and urged that a superintendent be appointed. After some discussion it was voted that a specified sum be paid to each school district and that "the residue of the school money be placed in the hands of the school committee with instructions to apply the same to the employment of a competent superintendent of the common schools."<sup>3</sup> This is the only

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> Springfield, *Town Records*, Vol. 6, pp. 557-558, April 6, 1840.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Also Springfield, *Gazette*, April 11, 1840.

city of the group studied where the city superintendency was established at a town meeting. It is of interest to note, however, that in Rhode Island the towns were authorized at a town meeting to elect a superintendent, and that, after some years of trial in 1871, it was provided that if the town failed to do so its school committee should make such an appointment.<sup>4</sup> This establishment of the superintendency in Springfield was not the result of specific or enabling state legislation. The reestablishment of the office, after a lapse of twenty-two years, was made by ordinance of the city council in conformity with Chapter 314 of the Massachusetts Statutes of 1854—somewhat revised by later acts.<sup>5</sup> The ordinance was the result of an appeal by the school committee which was referred to the committee on education of the city council, whose report was favorable.<sup>6</sup>

In Boston the superintendency was established when the city council made an appropriation for the salary of the superintendent before state legislation authorizing this office had been enacted. This was many years after a state official, Horace Mann, the secretary of the Massachusetts board of education, in the latter part of 1837 or early in 1838, had urged upon the grammar board the necessity of having a single person visit all the primary schools to aid the teachers and to instruct those desirous of becoming teachers.<sup>7</sup> Numerous efforts were made before success was achieved. In 1838 and 1845<sup>8</sup> early movements were made in this direction. The Worcester school committee made an appeal to the city council for funds to establish an office with duties "similar to those of the superintendent of public schools for the city of Boston,"<sup>9</sup> but the request was denied until a short time after the state had acted, when a

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<sup>4</sup> Rhode Island, *Report, Commissioner of Education*, p. 26, 1871.

<sup>5</sup> Springfield, *Ordinance Book*, Ordinance No. 67, 1864.

<sup>6</sup> Springfield, *Minutes, Board of Aldermen*, October 10, 1864.

<sup>7</sup> Wightman, J. M., *Annals of the Boston Primary School Committee*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>8</sup> Boston, *Advertiser and Patriot*, November 29, 1845.

<sup>9</sup> Worcester, *Minutes, School Committee*, December 14, 1852.

procedure much like that for the reestablishment in Springfield was followed.

Providence also secured the establishment of the superintendency through the council. A report by a committee of the council in 1837 led to the passage of an ordinance in 1838. Thomas Dorr has been given credit for this movement by many writers, and, while no evidence has been found to warrant the credit he generally receives, he certainly was a most vigorous defender of the system.<sup>10</sup> Of particular interest are the facts that the ordinance of 1838, referred to above, provided for the construction of new buildings and the reorganization of the school system as well as the establishment of the superintendency, and that in consequence of slow progress in school construction it was found to be impossible to receive the students at as early a period as had been contemplated. The council therefore suspended all the provisions of the ordinance except the section authorizing the appointment of a superintendent of schools. Instead of suspension in this case they urged appointment "without any unnecessary delay."<sup>11</sup> The city council thus not only answered the question as to whether or not "the schools shall still be managed in the dull old plodding way that they have been, or be remodeled and governed according to the improved plan which the results of accumulated experience conclusively point out as preferable,"<sup>12</sup> but also urged haste in the practice of the improved idea.

Other cities in which the city council or councils took the initiative, despite lack of specific legislative authority, for the innovation in question, or where the general education control was thought sufficient evidence of authority, are: Cleveland;<sup>13</sup> Richmond, in response to a petition by a

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<sup>10</sup> Providence, *Annual Report, School Committee*, 1841.

<sup>11</sup> Rhode Island, *Reports and Documents Relating to Public Schools*, p. 59, 1848.

<sup>12</sup> Providence, *Journal*, March 26, 1838.

<sup>13</sup> Cleveland, "Ordinance of City Council, June, 1853." *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 88-89, 1855-1856.

large number of the citizens;<sup>14</sup> Chicago;<sup>15</sup> San Francisco, where a board of education and the superintendency were established by the same ordinance,<sup>16</sup> thus showing the spread of the concept of the superintendency; Nashville, where Alfred Hume, after studying various city school systems, recommended to the aldermen the adoption of a plan similar in some respects to that of Boston, where the schools "are on all hands confessed to be equal, if not superior to any in the Union,"<sup>17</sup> and again where the board of education and superintendency came into existence at the same time; Louisville, following an appeal of the mayor;<sup>18</sup> Memphis, where, after the establishment of the superintendency, no plans had been devised as yet for the common schools, and the first board of managers, composed of the mayor, two aldermen, and two citizens, made known that suggestions would "be thankfully received by the board from persons feeling an interest in this undertaking. The board is not yet committed to any particular system and desires information upon the subject from all quarters and from all persons"<sup>19</sup>; Baltimore, where the long struggle of the board of school commissioners to secure authority from the city council has been narrated;<sup>20</sup> Washington; Atlanta; Philadelphia; and Los Angeles. The last four deserve further consideration because of developments in them. Washington should be mentioned because in its case the councils received their implied authority from Congress. In Atlanta the whole idea of a school system and its organization was studied by a committee, of the council, on public

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<sup>14</sup> Virginia, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Public Instruction*, pp. 19-20, 1871.

<sup>15</sup> Chicago, "Ordinance of City Council, November 28, 1853." *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1879.

<sup>16</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Evening Post*, September 30, 1851.

<sup>17</sup> Hume, A., *Report on the Subject of Public Schools in the City of Nashville to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, p. 15, August 15, 1852.

<sup>18</sup> *Ante*, p. 39.

<sup>19</sup> Memphis, *Daily Eagle*, August 1, 1841.

<sup>20</sup> *Ante*, pp. 15-17.

schools<sup>21</sup> and definite plans were therefore in mind when the legislature of Georgia, in 1870, empowered the mayor and council to establish and maintain a system of public schools. In one sense, consequently, it might be maintained that the legislature was responsible for the superintendency as well as the system inaugurated.

Philadelphia must be noted because of an early establishment when the council was not involved and a later one when it was in charge of the finances. In 1840 it was "Resolved that the [A. D. Bache] be requested to undertake the superintendence of the Model School—and also of the public schools in all the sections of the First School District whose directors should concur in his exercise and discharge of the aforesaid duty with a view to the improvement of the instruction therein afforded."<sup>22</sup> It was further resolved that, in addition to his salary as principal of the Public Central High School for Boys, he should receive one thousand dollars per annum for the "superintendence of the Model School and other schools herein before referred to and for his services in the organization and conduct of the contemplated high school for girls."<sup>23</sup> In response of these resolutions, Bache said, "Whatever may be in my power to do and advance the cause of public instruction in the district will be cheerfully undertaken."<sup>24</sup>

Because of the many duties connected with the Central High School, it has been stated,<sup>25</sup> he never entered actively into the performance of the duties of superintendent. There is also the possibility that the sectional boards did not in any great numbers concur in his exercise of such duties. Whatever the cause, in 1847, when the Baltimore board of school commissioners sent out a circular concerning the

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<sup>21</sup> Atlanta, *City Council, Report, Committee on Public Schools*, November 22, 1869.

<sup>22</sup> Philadelphia, *Minutes, Board of Controllers*, September 8, 1840.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, October 12, 1840.

<sup>25</sup> Public Education Association, Philadelphia, *A Generation of Progress*, pp. 18-19.

development of the superintendency, John S. Hart, of the board of controllers of Philadelphia, replied that a superintendent "is, in my opinion a great desideratum, both as respects economy and efficiency. We have none here but want one much."<sup>26</sup>

This want pressed with ever-increasing urgency as the years passed and one president of the board after another urged the establishment of the superintendency. In 1868 the board of controllers resolved<sup>27</sup> that the appointment of a superintendent was expedient and requested an appropriation by the council for the salary of such an officer. The committee on the revision of studies was asked to report the names of suitable persons to fill the office. A year later, however, under the chairmanship of H. C. Hickok, the former state superintendent of common schools in Pennsylvania, a lengthy report<sup>28</sup> was submitted, urging the establishment of the office. Meeting with no success, activity waned at times and then again surged forward. That the board of education, as the central board was now known, was not always too thoroughly behind the idea is evinced by a vote of the board of eleven nays against nine yeas that a request be made to the councils to insert an item in the budget for the payment of the salaries of a superintendent and two assistants.<sup>29</sup> This action could not be understood by the editor of the *Pennsylvania Common School Journal*, although if the council had refused to grant the money it could have been understood. The editor was sufficiently aroused to quote a member of the board who said: "Philadelphia has got along without a superintendent and it is not necessary to have one now," and another who asserted, "The schools of Philadelphia are superior to those of any other city." The editor stated that "it is only the honest

<sup>26</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 33, 1847.

<sup>27</sup> Philadelphia, *Minutes, Board of Controllers*, May 12, 1868.

<sup>28</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 18, pp. 227-230, February, 1870.

<sup>29</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal, Board of Public Education*, September 14, 1880.

truth, to say that her schools are behind those of nearly all other cities of the United States and Europe."<sup>30</sup> He added further that the board of education members might study the situation if they doubted the truth of this charge, or better, "employ a disinterested *expert* to visit and inspect the schools and report their excellencies and defects."

While this was more of an attack than a report upon the school situation in Philadelphia it was similar to the report of Fraser<sup>31</sup> which had been made several years previously. Even before that date, E. E. White<sup>32</sup> of Ohio, in speaking of the Philadelphia schools said that he was of the opinion that a "jury of intelligent educators would . . . pronounce them 25 years behind the district schools of Cincinnati. We think the explanation of this result is found largely in the fact that *the schools of Philadelphia are practically without supervision.*" Despite these opinions, the harranguing continued and no superintendency was established until Philadelphia had approximately 106,000 pupils in the public schools and an additional 28,000 in no school, either public or private. Then, in 1882, upon the request of the board of education, an appropriation for 1883 was voted by the city council and the superintendency was established.<sup>33</sup>

In Los Angeles the schools were under the control of the *Ayuntamiento* during the Mexican régime. When this territory came under American control the common council assumed control of education. Little was done until 1853, when the council provided by ordinance for the appointment of three of its members to serve as a city board of education, "the chairman to be superintendent of the public school."<sup>34</sup> The ordinance further provided that the "board of education shall have the power to elect from their midst

<sup>30</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 29, p. 212, November, 1830.

<sup>31</sup> Fraser, J., *Report on the Common School System of the United States and of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada*, p. 62.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Education*, pp. 9-13, 1882.

<sup>34</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, City Council*, July 26, 1853.



a chairman." At the same meeting of the council, Messrs. Joseph L. Brent, Lewis Granger, and Stephen C. Foster were appointed the board of education. J. M. Guinn states that Joseph L. Brent, "by virtue of his position as chairman of the board,"<sup>35</sup> became superintendent. This statement indicates a lack of knowledge concerning the selection of the chairman as provided by ordinance, and consequently the first superintendent may not have been Joseph L. Brent.

The schools operated under this ordinance nearly one year. Then another ordinance<sup>36</sup> was passed, providing for a board of education of three members and a superintendent of common schools. A few days later<sup>37</sup> Mayor Stephen C. Foster was appointed superintendent of common schools. J. M. Guinn considers him the first superintendent of schools, because the previous officer "was superintendent *ex officio* only."<sup>38</sup>

Of especial interest in Los Angeles was the discontinuance of the superintendency. In 1869 Dr. T. H. Rose, a successful teacher, was elected superintendent and, although he did not succeed in the office, failure came through no fault of his. The sexes were educated separately in the higher grades. Dr. Rose was principal of the boys' grammar school and a woman was principal of the girls' grammar school. The relations of the two principals were strained to the utmost before Dr. Rose's election and after that event they snapped asunder. The woman principal defied his authority and refused to be supervised. An investigation of the law governing the schools revealed the fact that the office existed in name, but the incumbent had neither power nor authority to enforce his decrees. So the

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<sup>35</sup> Guinn, J. M., "Pioneer School Superintendents of Los Angeles." *Historical Society of Southern California Publications*, Vol. 4, pp. 76-81.

<sup>36</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, City Council*, May 19, 1854.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, May 25, 1854.

<sup>38</sup> Guinn, J. M., "Pioneer School Superintendents of Los Angeles." *Historical Society of Southern California Publications*, Vol. 4, pp. 76-81.

office "died of inanition"<sup>39</sup> or fell into a state of "innocuous desuetude." Three years later the office was revived through a special act of the California legislature, which created a board of education and provided that the board may "delegate to any teacher of the public schools of the city such of their powers and duties in relation to the interior management of said schools as they in their discretion shall deem proper."<sup>40</sup>

Consideration must now be given to cities in which the superintendency was established as the result of, or on the basis of, specific state legislation, and then finally to cities where the board of education assumed the initiative in this development. A special act of the legislature of New Jersey conferred upon the board of education in Newark the "power from time to time to appoint a city superintendent of public schools."<sup>41</sup> A month or two later<sup>42</sup> Dr. Stephen Conger was elected the first superintendent. The people of Jersey City gained the right of electing a school superintendent in the city charter<sup>43</sup> passed by the legislature March 18, 1851. This charter, as prepared by local public committees and "amended and approved by the people in public meeting," was approved by the legislature with no change concerning the school superintendent.<sup>44</sup> Other cities in which the legislature took steps making possible the establishment of the office are: Brooklyn, where a special act<sup>45</sup> grew out of a study of the conditions of the schools by a committee on the public schools of the city council; Cincinnati, where, by act of March 23, 1850, the

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *California Statutes*, 1871-1872. Act approved February 24, 1872.

<sup>41</sup> Newark, "An Act to Incorporate the Board of Education of the City of Newark," Approved February 3, 1853. *Minutes, Board of Education*, 1836-1868, pp. 8-9.

<sup>42</sup> Newark, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 9, 1853.

<sup>43</sup> Jersey City, *Charter and Ordinances*, p. 5, 1851-1862.

<sup>44</sup> Jersey City, *Daily Telegraph*, March 21, 1851.

<sup>45</sup> Brooklyn, *By-Laws of the Board of Education and Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Public Schools*, pp. 15-16, 1849.

office was established<sup>46</sup> and where, at the election on the first Monday of April of the same year, it was first filled; Rochester, where the board of education, by the school law applying to Rochester which went into effect June 15, 1841, was authorized to appoint a superintendent, which right was promptly exercised by the board of education;<sup>47</sup> Savannah, the schools of which, by the act of March 11, 1866, were placed under a permanent body, or board of education, "with perpetual succession of members,"<sup>48</sup> which had the authority to designate or elect officers; New York, where the change from the county superintendency to the city superintendency was previously mentioned;<sup>49</sup> Buffalo, where, by act of May 15, 1837, the office of superintendent of common schools was established and its incumbent given "the duties and obligations" generally borne by the "inspectors of the common schools of the different towns"<sup>50</sup> of the state. In addition to these special acts of legislatures, in some cases there were acts of a more general nature. Thus the superintendency in Pittsburgh was established in 1868,<sup>51</sup> under the law of Pennsylvania of 1867, which authorized the election of superintendents in cities and boroughs of over ten thousand population. Salt Lake City also established the superintendency under a general act concerning schools of different class districts.<sup>52</sup>

In the remainder of the cities included in this study—namely, Wilmington, Kansas City, New Haven, Denver, Omaha, Seattle, Portland, St. Louis, Indianapolis, New Orleans, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Detroit—the board of education filled the office of superintendent without having

<sup>46</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1850, "An Act to Authorize the Appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools in the City of Cincinnati and for Other Purposes Passed March 23, 1850."

<sup>47</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 32-33, 1863; Rochester, *Daily Democrat*, July 7, 1841.

<sup>48</sup> Savannah, *Charter*, pp. 31-32, 1870.

<sup>49</sup> *Ante*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>50</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Star*, May 25, 1837.

<sup>51</sup> Pittsburgh, *Gazette*, April 24, 1868.

<sup>52</sup> *Utah Territory Laws*, 1890, "An Act to Provide a Uniform System of Schools Throughout Utah. Approved March 13, 1890." Section 105.

been specifically granted the power to do so.<sup>53</sup> In Detroit, in 1855,<sup>54</sup> the board of education elected a superintendent for one year, after which the office remained unfilled until 1863. From this time on it was permanently a part of the school system of Detroit, but doubt<sup>55</sup> as to the authority of the board of education to create the office continued until February 24, 1869 when the question was settled by an act of the legislature expressly conferring such authority upon the board of education.<sup>56</sup>

From this presentation it is apparent that many city councils and boards of education established the superintendency without such right having been definitely granted by the state, and consequently under implied authority. Establishment under these conditions frequently led to criticism of the superintendency by those who doubted the legality of the office, or saw in such expression of doubt a stronger reason for opposing the establishment than the reason which in many instances was the real cause for opposition. What would have happened in Los Angeles had the city council supported the superintendent in 1870 and carried the case into the courts is not known. The case would have been a complicated one, for the superintendent was elected by the people and not directly responsible to either the city council or the board of education.

The implied power of the board of education to establish the superintendency and pay a salary therefor was upheld in the case<sup>57</sup> appealed from the Circuit Court of Douglas

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<sup>53</sup> See, for example, Wilmington, *Daily Commercial*, October 27, 1870; Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 60-61, 1871-1872; Denver, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 5, 1871; Omaha, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 3, 1872; Portland, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, June 30, 1873; St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 2, 1839; New Orleans, *Municipality No. 2, Minutes, Board of Education*, November 13, 1841; Atwater, I, *History of the City of Minneapolis*, p. 118; Milwaukee, *Proceedings, Board of Education*, April 6, 1859.

<sup>54</sup> Detroit, *Daily Advertiser*, April 6, 1855.

<sup>55</sup> Farmer, S., *The History of Detroit and Michigan, or The Metropolis Illustrated*, p. 752.

<sup>56</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 91-93, 1869.

<sup>57</sup> *Henry Spring et al. v. James Wright et al.* 63 Illinois 90.

County to the Illinois Supreme Court in the January, 1872, term of Court. This was a suit to enjoin the board of directors from paying the salary of the superintendent of schools on the ground that the board had no power to appoint a superintendent. The Circuit Court held that the board, "by necessary implication from the duties imposed upon it, had authority to appoint a superintendent over the schools." The state Supreme Court, in affirming the decree of the lower court, said:

"We have no doubt that the Circuit Court decided correctly in holding they had such power. A special law passed March 9, 1867 makes it the duty of those districts to establish and keep up a system of graded schools in said city. The evidence shows that there are ten teachers, in different rooms, and over eight hundred pupils, and that a general superintendent is necessary to the successful working of the system. This we can readily comprehend and the power to appoint and pay this officer must be considered as given by necessary implication."

The decision in the well-known Kalamazoo Case was similar; Justice Cooley held that "the power to make the appointment [of superintendent] was incident to the full control which by law the board had over the schools of the district and that the board and the people of the district have been wisely left by the legislature to follow their own judgment in the premises."<sup>58</sup>

The matter of authority for the establishment of the superintendency having been dealt with, it is of importance to consider very briefly the date of its establishment in the various cities. The dates are presented in Table 1, pp. 81-82, along with the population of each city as of the census nearest the time indicated. The cities are arranged in the order of priority in establishment of the superintendency. Two dates appear for three cities, namely Springfield, Philadelphia, and Detroit, which experienced an establishment and reestablishment of the office at rather long intervals of

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<sup>58</sup> *Charles E. Stuart et al. v. School District No. 1 of the Village of Kalamazoo et al.* 30 Michigan 69.

TABLE 1

DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY<sup>59</sup>  
AND POPULATION OF CITIES AS OF UNITED STATES  
CENSUS FOR THE YEAR NEAREST<sup>60</sup> DATE OF  
ESTABLISHMENT

CITY	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT	POPULATION AS OF NEAREST CENSUS
1. Buffalo	1837	18,213
2. Louisville	1837	21,210
3. St. Louis	1839	16,469
4. Providence	1839	32,171
5. Springfield <sup>61</sup>	1840	10,985
“	1865	15,199
6. Philadelphia <sup>61</sup>	1840	93,665
“	1883	847,170
7. Cleveland <sup>61</sup>	1841	6,071
“	1853	17,034
8. Rochester	1841	20,191
9. New Orleans	1841	102,193
10. Brooklyn	1848	96,838
11. Memphis	1848	8,841
12. Baltimore <sup>61</sup>	1849	169,054
“	1866	267,354
13. Cincinnati	1850	115,435
14. Jersey City	1851	6,856
15. Boston	1851	136,881
16. New York	1851	515,547
17. San Francisco	1851	56,802 <sup>62</sup>
18. Nashville	1852	10,165
19. Newark	1853	38,894
20. Los Angeles	1853	1,610
21. Chicago	1854	29,963
22. Indianapolis	1855	8,091
23. Detroit <sup>61</sup>	1855	21,019
“	1863	45,649
24. Worcester	1856	24,960
25. Minneapolis	1858	2,564
26. Milwaukee	1859	45,246
27. New Haven	1860	45,267
28. Savannah	1866	28,235
29. Kansas City	1867	32,260
30. Pittsburgh	1868	86,076
31. Washington	1869	109,199
32. Richmond	1869	51,038
33. Wilmington	1870	30,841
34. Denver	1871	4,759
35. Atlanta	1871	21,789

<sup>59</sup> Some dates may be thought of as being of forerunners of the superintendent. This is particularly true of the earliest date given for Cleveland and Baltimore.

<sup>60</sup> Thus population from 1836 to 1845 inclusive is from the census of 1840; 1846 to 1855 inclusive is from the census of 1850; et cetera.

<sup>61</sup> For explanation of two dates, see text, pp. 80, 82.

<sup>62</sup> As of 1860. No report made in 1850.

36. Omaha	1872	16,083
37. Portland	1873	8,293
38. Seattle	1882	3,533
39. Salt Lake City	1890	20,768

time.<sup>63</sup> Cleveland and Baltimore have two dates, the earliest in each case being that of the establishment of the chief forerunner of the superintendent. The dates here presented are not the earliest which might be given in every case. Although it is not claimed that Louisville and Buffalo were the first cities to establish the superintendency, it is perhaps of some value to present the facts in order to clear up the dispute as to which of them established the office or, rather, filled it first. The Buffalo common council, by ballot, appointed R. W. Haskins superintendent of common schools on June 9, 1837.<sup>64</sup> The first agent, Samuel Dickenson, of the public schools in Louisville was elected by the board of mayor and aldermen on July 31, 1837.<sup>65</sup> Both these men accepted the position and served although R. W. Haskins resigned in the fall of 1837 after finding himself without power and after vainly endeavoring to accomplish the changes desired. Providence has also shared in the discussions of the first significant superintendency. While the two cities mentioned above were prior to Providence in this development, Providence has a significant claim, for the superintendency as there established was more similar to the type which later came to be regarded as the most desirable. Furthermore, probably on account of the character of the man who filled the office, the length of his tenure, and the general administrative set-up in Providence, its influence in furthering the idea was considerably more widespread than that of the two cities which had made a less highly developed move a short time previously.

Enough has been said of the dates, but in final consideration of Table 1, pp. 81-82, it is interesting to note that the eastern cities, and older cities in general, were larger than

<sup>63</sup> For other instances of the discontinuance of the superintendency, see pp. 83-88.

<sup>64</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, Common Council*, June 9, 1837.

<sup>65</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July 31, 1837.

the western and newer cities at the time of the establishment of the superintendency. This is probably due to a number of factors or conditions such as the following: The general acceptance of the idea came when the eastern cities were much larger than the western cities. Also, the eastern cities were more influenced by tradition and, not having had the experience of the frontier, were less democratic and did not feel so keen a responsibility for providing education for all. Then, too, the older cities had more men of leisure, or at least more residents who were not hard pressed by the economic struggle, than had the new cities. Consequently the older cities had many more men willing to devote a considerable amount of time to such a public service as education.

While reference has been made to the discontinuance of the office after its establishment, a more detailed treatment of this subject is in order. Springfield, at a town meeting two years after entrusting the securing of a superintendent to the school committee, voted "That the office of the superintendent of common schools be abolished."<sup>66</sup> At this meeting the attendance was small, but the *Springfield Gazette*<sup>67</sup> maintained that it "would have been still smaller" but for the attendance of many from "some of the outer portions of the town" who came to vote against the appropriation for a superintendent of common schools. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the town refused to grant such appropriation was "negatived by a strong majority." In Nashville, in 1869 and 1870, the city council considered abolishing the said office, whereupon the board of education decided to elect a superintendent for the remainder of the school year, subject to the final action of the city council, and at the same time appointed a committee "to confer with city council and urge the continuance of the office of superintendent."<sup>68</sup> In a Boston school committee meeting in 1856,

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<sup>66</sup> Springfield, *Town Records*, April 4, 1842.

<sup>67</sup> Springfield, *Gazette*, April 20, 1842.

<sup>68</sup> Nashville, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 17, 1870.



upon consideration of the duties of the superintendent, it was moved that the office be abolished "and that the useful and practical duties of the office be devolved upon the secretary."<sup>69</sup> This motion was rejected, but a belief was expressed that the office had failed in its object and the whole matter was referred to the committee on rules and regulations which reported against the adoption of the "suggestions for the abolition of the office."<sup>70</sup>

In Cincinnati, while the board of education asked the continuance of the office in 1851,<sup>71</sup> two years later<sup>72</sup> on motion it was resolved, "That the General Assembly of Ohio be requested to abolish the office of superintendent of common schools in this city." This may have been due to the fact that the superintendent was elected by the people and was not an officer of the board as was desired. An attempt was also made in 1858 to abolish the office, the election of the superintendent now being in the hands of the board of trustees and visitors. This grew out of the resignation of several teachers, who gave as the cause the "rudeness of manner [of the superintendent] in subjecting them to a public reprimand."<sup>73</sup> A committee which was appointed by the board to look into the matter reported on November 9, 1857 that "the superintendent's personal manner is characterized by a measure of stiffness and reserve that repels confidence, begets distrust and results in estrangement of sentiment,"<sup>74</sup> thus producing an undesirable situation "although attributable to a misfortune of manner." In August, 1868 it was moved that "after the close of the present school year the office of the superintendent of common schools of this city be dispensed with until otherwise ordered by the Board."<sup>75</sup> This motion was made the special

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<sup>69</sup> Boston, *Post*, November 26, 1856.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, December 10, 1856.

<sup>71</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 11, 1851.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, January 5, 1853.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, November 9, 1857.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, August 16, 1858.

order for a following meeting, when it was defeated by a vote of sixteen to eleven.<sup>76</sup> Thus the attempt to dispense with the office because of a dislike of the manners of the incumbent was defeated.

B. G. Northrop, of the Massachusetts board of education, speaking before the American Institute of Instruction, stated that Lowell, Massachusetts, was the only city within his knowledge which had suspended the office after making a trial even for a single year. In this case it was due to most unfavorable circumstances, "creating in many minds a prejudice against the office."<sup>77</sup> which existed at the time of the establishment. But while it had been established after five years of "interminable disputes," and amidst "a feeling of intense hostility and bitterness," the editor of the American Institute of Instruction *Lectures* stated, in a footnote, that between the time of the above mentioned lecture and its publication the office was reestablished. Northrop also tells of the discontinuance of the office in the town of Gloucester at a town meeting, after eleven years of success had attested to the wisdom of the measure, to the "profound regret" of the school committee, which considered the office "almost indispensable." This action was urged upon the ground of economy, while the school committee stated that as a matter of "practical economy it would prove eminently unsound" and secure "only an apparent reduction in our expenditures."

While Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Springfield, and Worcester have been mentioned for the discontinuance of the office and its reestablishment, St. Louis is outstanding in this matter. In St. Louis the office, which was first established in 1839,<sup>78</sup> was neither mentioned nor filled when officers were elected in 1840. It was reestablished in 1841, to be dispensed with by motion in December<sup>79</sup> of the same

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, August 23, 1858.

<sup>77</sup> Northrop, B. G., "Supervision of Schools." American Institute of Instruction, *Lectures*, p. 79, 1863.

<sup>78</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 2, 1839.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, December 18, 1841.

year. In 1842 the board of directors, undecided as to the best procedure, "invited H. S. Geyer, Esq., to attend one of their meetings with a view to submitting to the board the plan which they understand he has in contemplation for the better management of the St. Louis public schools."<sup>80</sup> On June 13, 1848, upon the report of a committee, it was moved and adopted to provide the office of general superintendent, and on the same day a superintendent was elected. The superintendent also served as secretary. This continued until April 24, 1849, when a committee which had been appointed to inquire into the expediency of separating the office of superintendent and secretary reported<sup>81</sup> such a course desirable and advised "the abolition of the office of the superintendent until such time as the funds of the board would justify its continuance." When officers were elected May 1, 1849, there was no mention of a superintendent. On December 4, 1849,<sup>82</sup> it was resolved that the office of general superintendent of schools be created, and on December 11, 1849, the salary was fixed and a general superintendent elected. From this time the office continued to exist in St. Louis.

Seattle decided not to fill the office of superintendent in 1886<sup>83</sup> and in place thereof required the principals to report directly to the board. In January of the following year a superintendent was elected and the rules and regulations which had become inoperative during the vacancy were restored.<sup>84</sup> In connection with the principals an interesting situation arose in New Haven, where the *Evening Register*, upon the resignation of the superintendent, stated that "either the office of superintendent of public schools or the principalships should be abolished. It will save most money to abolish the last."<sup>85</sup> The same press on another occasion

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, February 1, 1842.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, April 24, 1849.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, December 4, 1849.

<sup>83</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, July 7, 1886.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, January 15, 1887.

<sup>85</sup> New Haven, *Evening Register*, November 16, 1881.

asked: "The principals of the public schools—what good are they? What do they do under the present system to earn \$2,200 a year? They cost the taxpayers of New Haven upwards of \$2,000 yearly—what equivalent do they render for this immense sum of money? Practically none."<sup>86</sup> Finally, on the day when the meeting of the board of education was to be held, this paper asked that they "elect a superintendent and abolish the principalships, or abolish the office of superintendent, put the principals to work, both at teaching and as deputy superintendents, and let them report to the board as the real superintendents of schools."<sup>87</sup>

A final interesting concept of the permanency of the superintendency is found in New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, where on January 2, 1847, a motion<sup>88</sup> was introduced to dispense with the services of the superintendent of schools and to abolish the High School for Boys and Girls. This was introduced because retrenchments were rendered "absolutely necessary" on account of the "embarrassed state" of the municipality financially. The motion was referred to a special committee on retrenchments. The majority report<sup>89</sup> of the committee stated that

"The schools have not yet attained that degree of systematic organization which would justify such a step, and that the time is yet far distant when such a proposition can with safety be acted upon. A board of directors, composed of gentlemen retired from business, who were familiar with the general subject of education, and who were willing to devote their time and attention to the supervision of the schools, might dispense with the services of a superintendent. It is no disparagement to those who are now directors to say they do not constitute such a board."

The school committee therefore recommended the rejection of the proposition. The minority report of the committee denounced the chair for having appointed as a member of the committee one who had declared that he "con-

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, November 15, 1881.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, November 15, 1881.

<sup>88</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 2, 1847.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, January 30, 1847.

sidered the suggested reform as applying the cleaver to the head, severing it from the body and rendering it lifeless," and recommended the adoption of the motion. The vote taken resulted in eleven nays and two yeas, and the superintendency continued.<sup>90</sup>

The mere continuance or discontinuance of the office tells only a small part of the story, however, for many directors were willing to have the office continued although they jealously protected the officer from any significant responsibility.

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER VI

THE STATUS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AS DEFINED BY  
STATUTES, ORDINANCES, AND RESOLUTIONS

In a number of cities, throughout the period studied, no qualifications for the office of superintendent were specified by law, ordinance, or resolution. This, of course, did not prevent members of the electing body from using such measuring instruments as they chose when selecting this officer. More data concerning the standard which, without official action, they established and exercised will be found in a later chapter, where the educational training, experience, et cetera, of superintendents will be considered.<sup>1</sup> The immediate problem is to analyze the qualifications specified in laws, ordinances, and resolutions.

The most common qualification mentioned was that the superintendent be an elector of the city. This qualification was established when the superintendent was thought of as a municipal officer. The officers of the city were required to be electors, and the members of the school committee or board of education, whom the superintendent was supposed to relieve of many of their duties, were also local men. In cities where this was not a requirement it was quite frequently a practice, because boards of education did not seek a superintendent outside of their city and superintendencies did not attract outside men. Nothing phenomenal could have been expected of the superintendent, since boards of education at that time had no intention of delegating their rights and responsibilities to him.

The ordinance establishing the superintendency in Baltimore mentioned, among other qualifications, that the superintendent must be a "resident of the city."<sup>2</sup> This ordinance continued in effect until 1897, when a revision of the charter of Baltimore was made by the state. However, even after this change was made, in 1900, when the board of school commissioners elected Van Sickle of Denver, Colorado, as superintendent, the first branch of the city council objected

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<sup>1</sup> Post, pp. 123-143.

<sup>2</sup> Baltimore, *Ordinances of Mayor and City Council*, pp. 169-170, 1866.

in view of the opinion of their solicitor. The president of the board then made a public statement<sup>3</sup>, pointing out that while the board of school commissioners was amenable to the mayor, grand jury, and courts, it was not answerable to the first branch of the city council. He further stated that, while the charter required "municipal officials, except females, to be registered voters" and while Chapter 356 of the "Acts of 1900" required that no person should be appointed to any public office unless he had been a resident of the state for twelve months, it provided also that "this act shall not affect the appointment of officers requiring special knowledge or training or the appointment to offices requiring expert knowledge or training." The president concluded that the office of superintendent required expert knowledge, and that the act here considered applied to Baltimore; the mayor and comptroller "unequivocally expressed the opinion that the superintendent was not a municipal official"; the court held that the superintendent was an agent of the state, "selected by the municipality to carry on within the limits of the city the beneficent purposes of the general school system of the Commonwealth,"<sup>4</sup> and that, being unable to find a man within the city limits with ability to perform the large duties imposed upon the superintendent by the new charter, it was essential and legal to call an able man from outside.

In Cleveland, while no provision concerning residence appears in acts or ordinances, it seems to have been understood that none but an elector was eligible. This is evinced by the naming of a committee,<sup>5</sup> in 1859, to confer with the superintendent regarding his eligibility for appointment to the office. The committee, in reporting,<sup>6</sup> recommended his reelection, "he having agreed to reinvest himself" with the status of an elector. Cincinnati had no requirements of this type except for the brief period of years when the super-

<sup>3</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, May 8, 1900.

<sup>4</sup> *Hooper v. New*. 85 Maryland 565.

<sup>5</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 7, 1859.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, June 13, 1859.

intendent was elected by the people.<sup>7</sup> While the act establishing it made no specific mention of his being a resident, this was understood to be a requirement, as it was in the case of practically all officers elected by popular vote. The same requirement existed in Jersey City, Buffalo, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, during the period when the superintendent was elected by popular vote.<sup>8</sup> In Buffalo, previous to popular election, the appointment was to be made in a manner similar to that of other officers appointed by the city council and consequently was restricted to electors.<sup>9</sup> Louisville's requirements were similar to those which Buffalo had in the early period. They became invalid, however, with the Louisville charter of 1851.<sup>10</sup> The municipal government of Washington, which established the superintendency by ordinance, probably had the same idea in mind when it provided that the superintendent be appointed "as the other officers of the corporation are appointed."<sup>11</sup> Two years later, when the corporation here referred to was abolished and a territorial government for the District of Columbia was substituted, it was provided by an act of the legislative assembly that to be eligible for such office an individual must "be a resident of and shall have exercised the right of suffrage in the District of Columbia."<sup>12</sup> When the District of Columbia was placed under the control of a board of commissioners a few years later these provisions became void. In New Orleans, action requiring the superintendent to be an elector was proposed in the Second District in 1855<sup>13</sup> but failed to pass. The board of school trustees of Salt Lake City, at the election of their first super-

<sup>7</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1850, "An Act to authorize the appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools in the City of Cincinnati and for Other Purposes. Passed March 23, 1850."

<sup>8</sup> For dates, see p. 101.

<sup>9</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Star*, May 25, 1837.

<sup>10</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July, 24, 1837; *City Charter, Approved March 24, 1851*, Article 10.

<sup>11</sup> District of Columbia, *Compilation of Laws*, p. 5, 1804-1929.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 14, 1855.



intendent in 1890, resolved "that this board declines to consider the nomination of any person for an office under the gift of the Board unless he be a registered voter of this city."<sup>14</sup>

In Los Angeles a superintendent was dismissed on the pretext of his not having been a qualified elector at the time of his appointment. When P. W. Search went to Los Angeles in 1894 from Pueblo, he introduced his plan of individualized instruction before educating the people. Less than a year elapsed before the board was dissatisfied and eager to have the office declared vacant. The board therefore called upon the city attorney for an opinion as to whether the present superintendent of schools was a legally elected officer. This was done in face of the fact that from 1872 the board of education in Los Angeles had felt free to elect superintendents from various parts of the country and had exercised that right. The city attorney replied that he had no information concerning Superintendent Search "other than at the time of his election he was not a qualified elector of this city. I therefore advise you that the necessary and legal qualifications of a city superintendent of schools of this city are as follows: First at the time of his election he must be a qualified elector of this city under the laws of this state."<sup>15</sup> Following the receipt of this opinion the board, by a vote of six to three, declared the office vacant<sup>16</sup> and later elected a "duly qualified superintendent" to assume office in August. It is interesting to note that by that time Search would have been in Los Angeles a year and therefore "duly qualified." The result of interviews<sup>17</sup> with the members of the board by a reporter of the *Los Angeles Daily Times* and a consideration of the above facts leads one to agree with the *Times* that the real reason, plainly written, would read: "Dismissed for attempting to introduce im-

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<sup>14</sup> Salt Lake City, *Minutes, Board of School Trustees*, July 19, 1890.

<sup>15</sup> Los Angeles, *Daily Times*, June 19, 1895.

<sup>16</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 20, 1895.

<sup>17</sup> Los Angeles, *Daily Times*, June 19, 1895.

proved methods in the Los Angeles public schools.”<sup>18</sup> Superintendent Search, after his removal, recommended in a letter to the people, published in the *Los Angeles Sunday Times* of June 23, 1895, that immediate steps be taken to arrange for better school provisions by revising the regulations of the city charter. Among other things, he recommended “the removal of every technical provision that would impoverish the city by confining the succession in the superintendency to subordinate officers.” In regard to certain other school conditions he mentioned that “even San Francisco” had provisions superior to those of Los Angeles.

Denver is the last city to be mentioned in connection with the requirement that the superintendent be a citizen of the city in which he is elected. In District No. 1 of this city, and of Arapahoe County, the district being not entirely within the city but including its most important section, it was provided by act of the Council and the House of Representatives of the Colorado Territory that the board of education, which was to be chosen under this act on the first Monday in May, 1874, should within twenty days after its election “appoint one competent person, who is a citizen of Denver, to serve as superintendent of schools.”<sup>19</sup> The act then specified some of the duties of the superintendent. The board of education which had served the year previously had had difficulty with the superintendent and on account of strained relations retained him only from month to month, with the understanding “that he hold the position only so long as he observes the directions of the board and gives the patrons good satisfaction.”<sup>20</sup> He remained throughout the year and when the new board was organized on May 5, 1874, it elected W. M. Newton, one of its members, superintendent, “without pay”<sup>21</sup> and F. C. Garbutt, the retiring superintendent, assistant superintendent for the

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<sup>18</sup> Los Angeles, *Daily Times*, June 23, 1895.

<sup>19</sup> Denver, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 52-53, 1875.

<sup>20</sup> Denver, District No. 1, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 16, 1873.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, May 5, 1874.

remainder of the scholastic year. This board was composed of able men who believed that Garbutt was not too well fitted for the position and further were not impressed with any "citizen of Denver" who could be secured for the salary to be paid. They therefore retained Garbutt while they looked abroad for an assistant superintendent, although they had not been granted the right to employ an assistant superintendent and although the act provided that the superintendent "shall receive a stated salary per annum" for his services. Not only did the board exhibit rare intelligence in thus not adhering strictly to the letter of the law, but it was also wise in electing<sup>22</sup> Aaron Gove, of Normal, Illinois, assistant superintendent. When he arrived in Denver the *Rocky Mountain News* announced that the "new superintendent of schools"<sup>23</sup> had arrived in the city and would shortly conduct the examination of applicants for the positions vacant in the public schools. The *News* was not alone in making the error of calling him the superintendent; the same term was used in the board of education meetings when speaking of him and he was generally regarded as such. He performed the duties of the superintendent which were specified in the act of the territorial legislature. After one scholastic year of service as *assistant superintendent*, he became a citizen of Denver and on May 11, 1875, he was elected superintendent of the public schools of the district for one year.

Educational qualifications varied from general requirements—such as the act relative to Denver<sup>24</sup> mentioned above and the charter of Louisville of 1860,<sup>25</sup> both of which specified a "competent" person, or an ordinance in Chicago<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Denver, District No. 1, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 21, 1874.

<sup>23</sup> Denver, *Rocky Mountain News Daily*, August 8, 1874.

<sup>24</sup> Denver, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 52-53, 1875.

<sup>25</sup> *Kentucky Statutes*, 1860. "An Act to Amend the Charter of the City of Louisville for School Purposes, Approved February 28, 1860."

<sup>26</sup> Chicago, "Ordinance of November 28, 1853." In *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1879.

and an act in Detroit<sup>27</sup> which required a "suitable" person—to acts which demanded college training or a certain number of years of professional experience. The ordinance establishing the superintendency in Baltimore specified a "suitable person . . . of literary and scientific acquirements and of skill and experience in the art of teaching."<sup>28</sup> The charter of 1897 required the superintendent to be a person "of education and experience in the management of schools,"<sup>29</sup> at least twenty-five years of age. In Cincinnati,<sup>30</sup> while the superintendent was elected by popular vote, an effort was made to require him to take and pass an examination for a "first principal's certificate" to be given by the board of examiners and inspectors. The president of the board held this out of order. Rochester, with no specified qualifications for many years, in 1898, under state law, required an eligible applicant to be "a graduate of a college or university recognized by the regents of the State of New York, together with at least ten years' practical experience as an educator."<sup>31</sup>

Milwaukee was the first city in which an act of the legislature required the superintendent to be a graduate of a college or normal school or the holder of a certificate granted by the state superintendent of public instruction. An act of March 19, 1859, which proposed to give the school board the specific power to appoint a superintendent, although it was believed by many that it already had such power definitely implied, required that the superintendent be a person "of suitable learning, experience, skill in the art of instruction and practical familiarity with the best methods of instruction and of organizing and conducting a system of city schools."<sup>32</sup> In spite of such legislation, Milwaukee suffered

<sup>27</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 92-93, 1869.

<sup>28</sup> Baltimore, *Ordinances of Mayor and City Council*, pp. 169-170, 1866.

<sup>29</sup> Baltimore, *Directory Public Schools*, pp. 146-149, 1901.

<sup>30</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 20, 1852.

<sup>31</sup> "New York Laws of 1898," Sec. 140C. In Rochester, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, 1900-1901.

<sup>32</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 81, 1869.

under as low a type of superintendents as any city in the country. Arising out of a crisis caused by the inefficiency of the superintendents came an act of April 7, 1865 which reiterated the qualifications specified in the act of 1859 and stated further that no one "shall be eligible" to the office "unless he has graduated at some college or normal school, within the United States, and has furnished the board with his diploma of graduation at such college or normal school, or unless he shall have received from the state superintendent of public instruction a certificate of his qualifications for the office of superintendent of schools, and shall have furnished the board with the same before the board proceeds to the election of said superintendent."<sup>33</sup> In 1872 came still another act, which went back to the requirements of the act of 1859 in so far as qualifications for the superintendent were mentioned. The reason for this change has not been ascertained. It is of interest to note, however, that in 1889 the board of education approved<sup>34</sup> a proposed charter provision which would have required the superintendent to "hold an unlimited state certificate or such diplomas or certificates as the state superintendent of public instruction shall certify to indicate equal scholarship to that required to obtain an unlimited certificate."

New Orleans deserves mention for the qualifications established by the boards of education. In the municipality No. 2 it was resolved, "that the superintendent and male principals of the schools must be citizens of the United States and of this state, and proficient in the various branches of education committed to their charge."<sup>35</sup> Municipality No. 1 required its superintendent to be a "citizen of the United States and practically and well acquainted with the systems of public education adopted in the other states of the Union and in Europe, and well qualified as a teacher of the differ-

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>34</sup> Milwaukee, *Proceedings, Board of Education*, February 20, 1889.

<sup>35</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 30, 1853.

ent branches of knowledge to be taught in said schools.”<sup>36</sup> Interesting light is thrown on the manner of determining ability to teach the various branches in a report submitted November, 1854, by the committee appointed to examine candidates for the office of superintendent. An examination of candidates was planned and notice of it was published in three newspapers. All members of the board were invited to attend the examination. At each session of the committee a memorandum was made in numbers of the “comparative proficiency in each case.” Only scholastic acquirements could be estimated and presented to the board in this manner. The following statement signed by the members of the committee appointed to examine superintendents was presented to the board:

Recapitulation<sup>37</sup>

Candidates	Reading, English Grammar, Analysis of Sentences, both Logical and Grammatical, and Rhetoric	Ancient and Modern Geography, Ancient and Modern History	Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, and Branches of Mathematics	Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and Astronomy	Latin Language	Aggregates
Walter Bailey	5	7	5	9		26
Ed. Halloran	6	10	5	5	3	29
Geo. Blackman	9	6	7	6	8	36
Ira Divoll	8	6	10	7	7	38
Samuel Torrey	8	6	10	6	10	40

<sup>36</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 1, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 23, 1847.

<sup>37</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 1, *Reports of Special Committees*, p. 26, January to December, 1854.

Los Angeles not only had the problem of deciding whether or not the superintendent need be an elector, which was discussed earlier in the chapter, but it also had to determine whether the superintendent must have been a teacher in its schools. In 1886 the death of Superintendent Smith rendered the prompt selection of a superintendent necessary. The board of education got in touch with a number of educators and selected W. M. Friesner, who was from the East. He arrived in Los Angeles three days before the opening of the schools. His diploma from Ohio Wesleyan University did not entitle him to a teacher's certificate in California. The board was advised by the state superintendent that Friesner did not need a certificate, and he therefore entered immediately upon the discharge of his duties. The committee on teachers reported a short time later that the board has "been subjected to harsh and ignorant criticism in regard to the matter. It has been claimed that the superintendent must personally have been a teacher in the department and a holder of a certificate . . . In order to allay criticism W. M. Friesner has obtained a First Grade Certificate and in order to free him from all question of the legality of his position your committee recommend: 1st. That Mr. Friesner be elected a teacher in the city schools. 2nd. That W. M. Friesner be elected superintendent of the schools of this city."<sup>38</sup> These recommendations were adopted, although had the Board desired the removal of Friesner, as a later board did in the case of Search, they unquestionably had a stronger case in this instance than the later board had. The law stated that the board "may delegate to any teacher of the public schools of the city such of their powers and duties in relation to the interior management of said schools as they in their discretion may deem proper."<sup>39</sup> Technically, therefore, it appears

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<sup>38</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 9, 1886.

<sup>39</sup> *California Statutes, 1871-1872*. "Creating a Board of Education for the City of Los Angeles, Etc. Act approved February 24, 1872."

that the board of education in adopting the recommendation of the committee on teachers did little or nothing more than comply with the statute.

Pennsylvania exercised a more rigid and widespread control over the superintendents in all cities except Philadelphia—which was frequently exempt from the general education laws—than did any other state. In Pittsburgh, when a superintendent was elected in 1868, the officers of the school directors' convention in which the election occurred, were instructed to notify the state superintendent of the election and to certify the evidence of his qualifications.<sup>40</sup> These instructions were in compliance with a law of 1867, which declared that no person is eligible to the office of county, city, or borough superintendent "who does not possess a diploma from a college legally empowered to grant literary degrees, a diploma or state certificate issued according to law by the authorities of a state normal school, a professional certificate from a county, city, or borough superintendent of good standing issued at least one year prior to the election, or a certificate of competency from the state superintendent of common schools, nor shall such person be eligible unless he has a sound moral character, and has had successful experience in teaching within three years of the time of his election: *Provided*, That serving as a county, city, or borough superintendent shall be deemed a sufficient test of qualification." The law continued, specifying how notification of election and qualifications were to be made to the superintendent of common schools, who, if the evidence submitted proved to meet the requirements of this act, was then to issue a commission to the individual elected. If upon examination the evidence of competency failed to satisfy the act,

"The superintendent of common schools shall appoint two competent persons, himself being the third, to examine the person so elected county, city, or borough superintendent, and if upon examination he be found duly qualified for the office, the said superintendent of

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<sup>40</sup> Pittsburgh, *Gazette*, April 24, 1868.



common schools shall issue him the usual commission; but if not the said superintendent of common schools shall proceed, in like manner, in respect to the person receiving the next highest number of votes in the convention of directors, who, if found qualified, shall receive the commission aforesaid as county, city, or borough superintendent; but if his qualifications are also found insufficient, the said superintendent of common schools shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the governor of the commonwealth, some other person with the required qualifications, county, city, or borough superintendent for the ensuing term of said office."<sup>41</sup>

Thus, while most states did little or nothing in requiring certain qualifications of their superintendents, Pennsylvania had the machinery to secure competent supervision. Of even more importance is the fact that the machinery functioned. R. K. Buerhle, superintendent of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, schools for many years reported that he served as examiner of superintendents whose qualifications had been challenged and knew of "at least one person elected city superintendent who was refused a commission because he had not "successful experience as a teacher within three years of the time of his election."<sup>42</sup>

A final word concerning qualifications, which, as has been noted, were in many cases not specified by act, ordinance, or resolution, is a reference to offices not compatible with the office of city superintendent. In the Utah Territory Laws of 1890, establishing a system of public schools in Utah, it was specified that the superintendent could not be a member of the board of education.<sup>43</sup> This was quite a contrast with the Los Angeles situation in 1853, when the superintendent had to be one of the board of education members.<sup>44</sup> By ordinance<sup>45</sup> in San Francisco it was stated that superintendent of common school for the city could not

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<sup>41</sup> *Pennsylvania Statutes*, pp. 56-57, 1867.

<sup>42</sup> Buerhle, R. K., "School Superintendents in Pennsylvania." *Educational Review*, Vol. 8, pp. 456-466. December, 1894.

<sup>43</sup> *Utah Territory Laws*, 1890, Act of March 13, 1890, Article XV, Section 105.

<sup>44</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, City Council*, July 26, 1853.

<sup>45</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Picayune*, September 30, 1851.

TABLE II  
APPOINTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENTS IN CITIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY IN WHICH  
AN AGENT OTHER THAN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DID THE APPOINTING, SHOWING  
APPOINTING BODY AND YEARS FUNCTIONING IN EACH CITY

Cities	People by Popular Election	City Council	State Board of Education	Mayor Nominates; Board of Aldermen Confirms	Governor of Territory	Commissioners	Board of Supervisors and Board of Education Jointly	School Directors at Convention	Board of Education	School Director
Los Angeles	1866-1869	1864-1866							1858 -	
San Francisco	1865-1868						1863-1869		1872-1900	
	1869-1900			1869-1871		1874-1900			1851-1855	
Washington										
Louisville		1837-1851							1900 -	
New Orleans			1869-1877		1871-1874				1851-1900	
									1841-1869	
Jersey City	1851-1871								1877-1900	
Buffalo	1853-1900	1837-1853							1871-1900	
Rochester	1843-1849									
									1841-1843	
Cincinnati	1850-1852								1850-1900	
Cleveland									1853-1900	
Pittsburgh								1869-1900	1853-1892	1892-1900
Memphis		1848-1856								
Richmond		1869-1870	1871-1900						1856-1900	

be a member of the board of education, nor of the common council. The paucity of high standards will be made clearer later through a consideration of the men who filled the superintendencies and the popular or press specifications of qualifications desired for the superintendents.<sup>46</sup>

In the thirty-nine cities studied, there were thirteen in which superintendents were at some time during the nineteenth century appointed by an agent other than the board of education.<sup>47</sup> In twenty-six cities the superintendent was appointed at all times by the board of education. In all except three of the thirteen cities which experienced appointment by an agent other than the board of education the superintendent was appointed by a board of education at one time during the century.

Pittsburgh is one of these three cities, and there the election was held by the directors of all the districts of Pittsburgh, who may well be thought of as the board of education, although a centralized board of education did exist.<sup>48</sup> Buffalo is another one of three, and since it had never had a board of education or similar body, educational functions being exercised by the city council, no other record could be expected. Richmond is the other city which throughout the nineteenth century never had a superintendent elected by a board of education. In Richmond, under ordinance of 1869, the superintendent was appointed by the council.<sup>49</sup> In 1871 the schools of Richmond became a part of the state system of schools and the superintendent was appointed by the state board of education.<sup>50</sup> Appointment by this body was not a desirable method, for a change in politics meant a new superintendent. The city board of education generally recommended some one to the state board of education for office. In some instances the state board followed the recommendation of the city board of education, but in others it

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<sup>46</sup> *Post*, pp. 123-146.

<sup>47</sup> See Table II, p. 101.

<sup>48</sup> For relation of sectional boards and central board, see pp. 151-152.

<sup>49</sup> Richmond, *City Council Ordinances*, pp. 250-251, 1869.

<sup>50</sup> *Virginia Statutes*, pp. 406-407, 1870-1871.

did not do so. Thus, in 1876, upon the unanimous recommendation<sup>51</sup> of the city board of education, J. H. Paey was elected superintendent, while, in 1882, in spite of the successful service of Superintendent Paey and a unanimous appeal by the city board that he be continued, he was not re-elected. In fact, in the face of a petition<sup>52</sup> that Superintendent Paey be re-elected and that the city board be allowed the privilege of an interview with the state board on his behalf, no interview was granted, nor was the state board gracious enough to acknowledge the receipt of a request for one.<sup>53</sup>

New Orleans also experienced the appointment of the superintendent by the state board of education.<sup>54</sup> This was during the reconstruction period, when northern radicals were in control of the state and wished to compel the admittance of Negro children into the white schools. The state, by act of March 10, 1869, was divided into six districts, one of which was New Orleans. Each district had a division superintendent appointed by the state board of education. Perhaps state control was never more thorough over any city than it was in New Orleans during this period, for the members of the city board of school directors were also appointed by the state board of education.<sup>55</sup> In 1870 this control was lessened, when it was enacted that, of the eleven members of the board, six should be chosen by the state board of education and five by the city council.<sup>56</sup> In 1877, by act of the legislature, it was still further lessened; out of a board of twenty members, eight were now appointed by the state board of education and twelve by the board of administrators of the city.<sup>57</sup> This act also gave the city board of edu-

<sup>51</sup> Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 82, 1875-1876.

<sup>52</sup> Richmond, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 4, 1882.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, February 23, 1882.

<sup>54</sup> Louisiana, *Compilation of Educational Laws in Force*, 1869. Section 46, Act of March 10, 1869.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Section 10.

<sup>56</sup> Louisiana, *Annual Report, State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, p. 200, January, 1871.

<sup>57</sup> Louisiana, *Laws Regarding Free Public Schools*, 1877, Article 14, Act of March 26, 1877.

cation authority to elect a chief superintendent of public schools.<sup>58</sup>

Of the thirty-nine cities included in the study, all but five provided for the appointment of the superintendent by the board of education by 1900. Of these five, three have already been accounted for;<sup>59</sup> the two others are San Francisco and Cleveland.<sup>60</sup> In San Francisco, following a short period in the fifties during which appointment was made by the board of education, the superintendent was popularly elected throughout the century except for a brief period in the late sixties.<sup>61</sup> Washington had just adopted this plan after appointment had been made by the mayor, by the governor of the territory, and finally by the commissioners of the District of Columbia. The experience of Washington in appointment by individuals or boards other than the board of trustees was not a pleasant one. With the first superintendent a quarrel—which will be related later<sup>62</sup>—arose, which must have upset conditions far more than the superintendent helped them and must inevitably have hindered the growth of a strong superintendency for many years. Out of it came a resolution calling upon the mayor and the council to make the office of superintendent “elective by the board of trustees.”<sup>63</sup> A fight for such provisions had been made when the ordinance establishing the superintendency was being considered by the board of aldermen, but it was defeated by a vote of five yeas and seven nays.<sup>64</sup> No action was taken by the mayor and aldermen following the resolution of the board of trustees and, although such undesirable situations did not again arise, resolutions which were adopted by the board of trustees in 1874<sup>65</sup> and again

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 18.

<sup>59</sup> *Ante*, p. 102.

<sup>60</sup> *Ante*, p. 101.

<sup>61</sup> For more details, see pp. 108-110.

<sup>62</sup> *Post*, pp. 165-166.

<sup>63</sup> Washington, “Abstract of Proceedings of Board of Trustees, May 28, 1870.” *Annual Report*, pp. 178-179, 1866-1870.

<sup>64</sup> Washington, *City Evening Star*, May 5, 1869.

<sup>65</sup> Washington, “Abstract of Proceedings of Board of Trustees, March 11, 1874.” *Annual Report*, p. 155, 1873-1874.

in 1881,<sup>66</sup> asking respectively for authority to appoint its officers and to nominate the superintendent to the commissioners, indicate that conditions were not so agreeable as desired.

Cleveland, after having an acting manager appointed by the city council, in 1853 established the superintendency with election in the hands of the board of education.<sup>67</sup> The early boards were composed of public-spirited men, but as years passed the boards came to be composed more and more of inferior men until finally they were of a type which caused the people to demand a change. The result was the reorganization act of 1892, which provided for the election of a school director, with large powers, who had absolute authority in the selection of a superintendent of instruction.<sup>68</sup>

Election by the city council was an early practice in five cities. This was due to the nonexistence of highly developed boards of education as well as to the desire of the council to retain control. In most instances where the council appointed the superintendent, it also appointed the board of education. Buffalo was an exception to this, because it had no board of education. Appointment by the council of the board as well as of the superintendent explains why little friction seems to have developed under this plan. Election of the superintendent by council occurred when the cities were small or in the process of developing a school system. When Richmond discontinued the practice in 1870, it did not occur again throughout the century in the cities studied. It is interesting to note that the bill reported to the city council of Providence on March 12, 1838, contained the provision that "among the city officers annually appointed by the City Council, . . . the City Council shall appoint a super-

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<sup>66</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, February 8, 1881.

<sup>67</sup> Cleveland, "City Council Ordinance to Provide for the Regulation of the Public Schools in the City of Cleveland." In *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 88-89, 1855-1856.

<sup>68</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1892; Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 12-13, 1893.

intendent of the Public Schools.”<sup>69</sup> Certain amendments were proposed to this bill and among them was one “vesting the appointment of the superintendent in the School Committee instead of the City Council.” On this amendment “the yeas and nays were ordered” and were as follows: *Yeas*, 10; *Nays*, 8.<sup>70</sup> Providence narrowly but surely placed the “selection of the superintendent where it naturally should go, in the hands of the school committee,”<sup>71</sup> and avoided a condition which existed in many of the towns of Rhode Island concerning which Commissioner Stockwell wrote:

“It is extremely unfortunate for the welfare of our schools that, in the development in our State of the work and status of the superintendent of schools, the idea should have been allowed to gain a foothold that the office was in any way independent of the school committee, or that the occupant thereof was responsible to any others than the committee; for the whole theory of the office and its duties has ever been to make it the medium of the committee’s actions.”<sup>72</sup>

Finally, in regard to the matter of appointment, consideration must be given to election by the people. Six cities of the group studied employed this method for varying periods of time.<sup>73</sup> In Los Angeles this practice was introduced after appointment by the council as a result of its misinterpretation of the laws.<sup>74</sup> It was discontinued when the office was no longer filled because of lack of specific laws creating it. In Jersey City<sup>75</sup> and Cincinnati<sup>76</sup> it was the first method employed, probably as a result of similar selection of other officers in these cities. Rochester, in 1848, in the

<sup>69</sup> Barnard, H., *Scrapbook*. (Rhode Island Historical Society Library.)

<sup>70</sup> Providence, *Journal*, March 31, 1838.

<sup>71</sup> Rhode Island, *Report, Commissioner of Education*, pp. 133-134, 1887.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> See Table II, p. 101.

<sup>74</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, City Council*, April 25, 1866.

<sup>75</sup> Jersey City, *Charter and Ordinances*, p. 5, 1851-1862.

<sup>76</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1850. “An Act to Authorize the Appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools in the City of Cincinnati and for Other Purposes. Passed March 23, 1850.”

consideration of the difficulty of securing capable men for the superintendency, turned to election by the people in an effort to secure men who would serve for a longer period than had been the case under election by the board of education.<sup>77</sup> After two years, a return was made to election by the board of education.<sup>78</sup> The most vigorous demand encountered for election by the people was made by the superintendent of the Rochester schools a few years later. He stated that a change in school supervision was much needed, and went on to say:

"Few municipalities can boast better schools than ours; and yet few there are the provisions of whose school laws are so badly administered. Our Board of Education as at present constituted is liable to annual change. The superintendent, necessarily from his position the most important school officer, receiving his appointment from the annual boards is, of course, if he desires to retain his place, subject to the judgment, whims, caprices, of the appointing power. It is one thing for a superintendent to perform an act according to what his best judgment dictates as being right, but quite another thing to perform an act in such a manner as he has reason to believe the majority of the Board will sustain. A superintendent competent to fill the place will always seek and obtain the best information available upon every question of importance which may arise in the discharge of his official duties and should not be constrained in his action. The superintendent ought to be elected by the people, for at least two years, and be held responsible only to them for the faithful performance of the duties committed to his charge."<sup>79</sup>

A somewhat similar feeling was expressed by Superintendent Rice, of Buffalo, when, in 1852, he wrote that the provisions of the new charter in providing for "the election of a superintendent by the people, and extending the time of his holding the office to two years,"<sup>80</sup> had been dictated by experience. A few years later, under the new plan,

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<sup>77</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 35, 1863.

<sup>78</sup> *New York Statutes*, 1850. "School Law Pertaining to Rochester. Passed April 10, 1850." Section 166.

<sup>79</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 9-10, 1858.

<sup>80</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 6, 1852.



Superintendent Fosdick had a different conviction as a product of his experience when he wrote:

"It is to be regretted that the office has to be filled biennially and that, too, by a popular election, thus identifying the head of the department with some political party. The consequences resulting from this are not favorable to the schools as every action of the superintendent is viewed from a political standpoint, and he is opposed or supported in his endeavors to elevate the standards of popular education on political grounds. The present incumbent has studied to keep clear of politics in his administration of the affairs of the department, but has frequently been embarrassed by having them thrust upon him, and it has been very difficult at times to prevent the complications that are brought by them. He has not sought to know what were the political opinions of the employees of the department and flatters himself that the friends of the schools are satisfied with this course."<sup>81</sup>

A year later the superintendent of schools in San Francisco, in writing of popular election, believed that San Francisco was the "only city which inevitably and at once throws her schools into the political arena, amid elements generally turbulent and unmanageable."<sup>82</sup> He stated that the experience of the city was convincing evidence that "a better method for the election of persons to take charge of our schools—those who *should* possess special qualifications and fitness for the offices they are to fill"—could be found. Taking the point of view of the educator he wrote:

"We are sometimes belittled and our educational interests humiliated, if not degraded, by political tests forced in the mouths of candidates like gags into the half consenting jaws of animals. Partisan platforms are formed and school officers, whose duties bear as close relationship to their creeds as to the politics of the moon, are forced upon them. Questions of reconstruction and tidelands, Negro suffrage, and national taxation, Chinese suffrage, toleration or expulsion, become important questions, overtowering and subordinating all others. But views on educational questions, how insignificant are they! How little it matters what the claims of candidates are on edu-

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<sup>81</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 65-66, 1866.

<sup>82</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 58-59, 1867.

cational grounds! They may even despise public schools in their hearts, and it matters little; these sentiments are permitted to be entertained, if candidates only be politically pliable and sound in party faith and antecedents."

This opinion of the superintendent, and agreement with it by the board of education, led to the introduction of a bill into the legislature calling for a revision of the system. The bill proposed the election of the superintendent by the board of education for a term of four years. The *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, in asking that the bill be "killed" and that the law under which the "noble system of public schools" then existing be continued, called the bill a "covert attempt to concentrate power and to use it independent of such safeguards as have heretofore been provided." It was further stated that the "people are not even to have the right to say who shall superintend the public schools of this city. The superintendent takes his appointment from the members of the board and no opportunity is given the public to canvass his qualifications. His term is extended to four years for no particular reason unless that going before the people on one's merits is often an unsafe adventure. The deputy superintendent derives his power from his chief and things are made snug against a wet day all around. In short all at once there is a development of educational wisdom most astonishing."<sup>83</sup> A substitute school bill was approved March 30, 1868, in place of the bill here criticised. The *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* stated that the substitute avoided some of the strongest objections to the earlier proposed bill, for while the superintendent is to be elected without direct resort to the people "the choice is given to the School Directors and Supervisors"<sup>84</sup> jointly instead of to the former alone and the term is kept at two years, instead of being extended to four."<sup>85</sup> It closes its consideration of the matter, however, holding "to the opinion that the choice of

<sup>83</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Evening Bulletin*, March 11, 1868.

<sup>84</sup> The San Francisco board of supervisors had powers and responsibilities similar to those of the city council of other cities.

<sup>85</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Evening Bulletin*, March 23, 1868.

a superintendent had better be left to the people." Early in December, 1869, the superintendent who had favored this change in the law was to end a term as superintendent and the office was to be filled by the boards of education and supervisors in convention. This superintendent, who had been previously interested in taking the superintendency out of politics, now became filled with fear that the new plan would make the superintendent a "mere subordinate of the Board of Education."<sup>86</sup> This changed opinion occurred, the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* infers, because of fear that the boards which were to do the electing were not too favorable toward his continuance in the office. Therefore, another act was originated with the superintendent, or at least "conceived in his interest," which repealed the above law, placed the election of a superintendent for a term of two years in the hands of the people, and provided that the term of office of the present superintendent "is hereby extended to three years, and said superintendent shall be and remain the superintendent of common schools in and for said city and county, and continue in office as such until the first Monday in December in the year 1870."<sup>87</sup> The *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, which so strongly desired popular election, dropped that thesis and stated that this bill of questionable character, the nature of which aroused suspicions of a private and selfish purpose, and the demand for repeal of the act of 1868 for personal reasons "renders the proposition obnoxious and ought to insure its defeat."<sup>88</sup>

Superintendent Babcock, of San Francisco, in 1896, in discussing the desirability of popular election of the superintendent, considered it preferable for San Francisco to election by the board of education. He believed that under popular election the superintendent "may be a greater power with his Board in the management of the schools,"

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, December 7, 1869.

<sup>87</sup> *California Statutes*, 1869-1870, pp. 1-2. "Act of December 10, 1869."

<sup>88</sup> *San Francisco, Daily Evening Bulletin*, December 7, 1869.

and that in many cities where the superintendent was elected by the board of education "one half of the power of the superintendent is expended in keeping on the right side of the Board so as to continue himself in office."<sup>89</sup> The latter he believed to be necessary because "a man who keeps a corner grocery, and happens to be elected to the Board of Education, clothed with the little brief authority that attaches to the office, feels that he knows more about the administration of the schools of a great city than any superintendent of any considerable ability can know."<sup>90</sup> He favored popular election of the superintendent, cognizant of the fact that the nomination of the superintendent was made at a political convention which was controlled by a political boss, and with a knowledge of the defeat of the nomination of John Swett by a man who had never "touched the administration of schools in a large city," but who was aided by "political tricksters."<sup>91</sup>

Dismissal of the superintendent was generally vested in the appointing body. In the majority of the cities the acts, ordinances, or resolutions made no mention of dismissal, the right of the appointing body to dismiss being understood. A statement authorizing dismissal appears in a number of instances. Examples of this, with date of provision, are: Newark (1853),<sup>92</sup> "appointment shall continue during the pleasure of the Board of Education and no longer"; Memphis (1850)<sup>93</sup> and Louisville (1837),<sup>94</sup> superintendent subject to removal "by the Mayor and City Council" at any time; Kansas City (1869),<sup>95</sup> superintendent may be removed by "a majority of the votes of the Board"; Milwaukee (1859)<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 100-101, 1896.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>92</sup> Newark, *Minutes, Board of Education*, pp. 8-9, 1836-1868.

<sup>93</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, August 6, 1850.

<sup>94</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Councilmen*, July 24, 1837.

<sup>95</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 31-33, 1869-1870.

<sup>96</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 83, 1869.

and Baltimore (1866),<sup>97</sup> superintendent to hold office for a definite term "unless sooner removed"; Providence (1846),<sup>98</sup> superintendent to hold office one year "unless sooner removed, for sufficient cause"; Rochester (1850),<sup>99</sup> superintendent to hold office "during the pleasure of the Board." In the instance of Providence some interpretation of "sufficient cause" is found in an advertisement for applicants for the position in which it was stated that the superintendent would be "subject to removal, in case of inability and mismanagement."<sup>100</sup> In New Orleans, by act of March 26, 1877, when the appointing power was returned to the city board of education, it was provided that the superintendent could be removed by the board "for neglect of duty or other malfeasance, of which, after an impartial hearing by the board he shall have been adjudged guilty."<sup>101</sup> Rochester included in its rules one of the most detailed procedures. For sufficient cause the superintendent could be removed upon the concurrent vote of two thirds of all the members comprising the board, "after a copy of the charges against him shall have been served upon him personally at least ten days prior thereto, and such charges investigated, and after an opportunity for a hearing shall have been given him in defense before said board."<sup>102</sup> Interesting exceptions to the general rule that the appointing body alone could remove are found in Cincinnati under the act of March 23, 1850; in Chicago under the ordinance of November 28, 1853; and in Milwaukee under the act of March 19, 1859. In Cincinnati, while the superintendent was popularly elected, the board of trustees and visitors

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<sup>97</sup> Baltimore, *Ordinances of Mayor and City Council*, pp. 169-170, 1866.

<sup>98</sup> Providence, *By Laws of the School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools*, pp. 10-12, 1846.

<sup>99</sup> *New York Statutes*, 1850. "School Law Pertaining to Rochester. Passed April 10, 1850," Section 166.

<sup>100</sup> *Common School Journal*, Vol. 1, p. 192, 1839.

<sup>101</sup> Louisiana, *Laws Regarding Free Public Schools*, 1877, Article 18. Act of March 26, 1877.

<sup>102</sup> Rochester, *By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of Board of Education*. Adopted October 5, 1891, pp. 6-7.

was empowered to remove him "on good cause shown."<sup>103</sup> In Chicago the board of education was able to remove the superintendent by a vote at any time, and the city council reserved a similar right to itself by a two thirds vote of the council.<sup>104</sup> The superintendent of Milwaukee was elected by the board of education, but, the common council of Milwaukee was authorized to remove him for "misdemeanor in office, incompetency, or inattention to the duties of his office by a vote of two thirds," provided that before proceeding against him he shall have five days' notice, and shall be heard of himself or counsel, either party having the right to produce witnesses "sworn subject to the pains and penalties of perjury."<sup>105</sup>

Superintendents were elected for a term of one year in by far the greatest number of cities before the middle of the nineteenth century and for a quarter of a century after. City councils which elected superintendents all made such appointments annually. While the superintendent was popularly elected in Cincinnati, Jersey City, Rochester, and Los Angeles the term was one year while in Buffalo and San Francisco it was two years. In these instances short tenure existed because of the legal requirement. Tenure, in many instances where it was determined by the board of education, was no longer, due to the short term of office of members of the board who believed they could do nothing or little under a superintendent chosen by a previous board. In Seattle, when it was proposed in 1891 to disregard precedents and elect a superintendent for three years, the proposal was adopted by a vote of three to two. One of the objectors to the motion stated that he voted against it because it was "in his opinion contrary to law, vicious in prin-

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<sup>103</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1850. "An Act to Authorize the Appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools in the City of Cincinnati and for Other Purposes. Passed March 23, 1850."

<sup>104</sup> Chicago, "Ordinance of November 28, 1853." In *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1879.

<sup>105</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 81, 1869.

cipal [principle] and establishes a bad precedent.”<sup>106</sup> In Nashville, until 1904, the board of education was prohibited by law from electing a superintendent for more than one year, despite the fact that each “recurring annual election of a superintendent of schools aroused a widespread feeling of uneasiness in the entire school system”<sup>107</sup> and required an “annual solicitude for reelection” by the superintendent. In Richmond and Pittsburgh the term was three years by statute requirement.<sup>108</sup> In Wilmington it was first one year, then two years, and by 1876 three years, by resolution of the board of education.<sup>109</sup> In New York City, from the establishment of the office until 1897, when Greater New York was formed, the term of office was fixed by law at two years.<sup>110</sup> Baltimore city council, in establishing the office in 1866, provided for a term of four years.<sup>111</sup>

As the last decades of the century were spent, in a considerable number of cities the term of office for the superintendent was extended to two, and occasionally three, years in cities other than the cases above mentioned. This was effected by change in statute or ordinance (in a decreasing number of cases), and by board of education resolution, depending upon the city in question. Few members of boards of education in 1865, or even by the end of the century, accepted the viewpoint of the committee on schools of New Haven which, when asked to propose needed changes in the administration of the schools, suggested that the “superintendent shall not hereafter hold his office for the prescribed term of one year, but shall continue in his position until released or removed from office by a vote of the board.”<sup>112</sup> This suggestion was adopted by the committee,

<sup>106</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 22, 1891.

<sup>107</sup> Nashville, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 10-11, 1904-1905.

<sup>108</sup> *Pennsylvania Statutes*, 1867, pp. 51-59; *Virginia Statutes*, 1870-1871, pp. 406-407.

<sup>109</sup> Wilmington, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 8, 1876.

<sup>110</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 28-29, 1855.

<sup>111</sup> Baltimore, *Ordinances of Mayor and City Council*, pp. 169-170, 1866.

<sup>112</sup> New Haven, *Report, Board of Education*, pp. 18-19, 1865.

although a few years later indefinite tenure was no longer the procedure of New Haven. Educational leaders favored a three or five year term in general and not indefinite tenure. There were lay schoolmen, however, such as the president of the Milwaukee board of commissioners in 1895, who advocated, in lieu of a two-year tenure, no definite period but tenure subject to behavior and service, "as business men retain trusted and efficient employees in their service during good behavior and consider it unnecessary and absurd to fix a time limit."<sup>113</sup>

The salary paid to the early superintendent was in many instances meager. While at first thought one might suppose that the appointing power would fix the salary, such was not always the case. There were other instances, as in San Francisco, where an act of the legislature fixed a maximum possible salary, the city council fixed the salary within such limit, and the people elected the officer.<sup>114</sup> In Brooklyn, by the act of 1848, the board of education appointed and fixed the salary of the superintendent but the law stated that it must not exceed one thousand dollars.<sup>115</sup> The Jersey City board of education, by act of April 4, 1873, was given a similar right with a different salary stipulation.<sup>116</sup> A slight variation of this practice existed in Jersey City two years before this when the exact salary was specified in the charter,<sup>117</sup> although the appointment was in the hands of the board of education.

In Jersey City, during the period when the superintendent was elected by the people, his salary, like that of other municipal officers, was established by ordinance of the city council annually.<sup>118</sup> When the council appointed

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<sup>113</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners*, 1895.

<sup>114</sup> *California Statutes*, p. 264, 1855.

<sup>115</sup> Brooklyn, *By-Laws of the Board of Education and Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Public Schools*, pp. 15-16, 1849. Act of January 28, 1848.

<sup>116</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 6, 1876.

<sup>117</sup> Jersey City, *Charter and Supplement of 1871*. Charter adopted March 31, 1871.

<sup>118</sup> Jersey City, *Charter and Ordinances, 1851-1862*, pp. 107-109; pp. 159-162; pp. 181-184.



the superintendent it also fixed his salary. The salary of superintendents appointed by boards of education was at times subject to the approval of the council. More often, however, the salary itself was set by the council. This was true in Chicago, Louisville, Richmond, Cleveland, San Francisco, Providence, Worcester, and Springfield. It led to disputes in some instances, but was one of the holds upon the schools which the council often retained for many years. Had more of the superintendents been board of education members it might have led to difficulty in securing a superintendent similar to that which occurred in connection with the secretaryship of the board in Cleveland, where the council fixed the salary of the secretary at one hundred and fifty dollars. After each member of the board had been nominated for the position of secretary and after each in turn had declined, the board notified the council that it was "impossible fully and permanently to organize the board" under such salary conditions.<sup>119</sup> Cleveland experienced some difficulty in connection with the salary of the superintendent for, during the first three years, he continued devoting one half of his time to teaching in the high school where he had been principal; for this he received one thousand dollars voted by the board; the remainder of his time was spent as superintendent, for which the council voted him three hundred dollars.<sup>120</sup> When he became full-time superintendent he was voted a decrease of three hundred dollars and for a time received less than the grammar school principals. His salary was later restored. As a result of the salary of the superintendent being fixed by the council, boards of education found it necessary in a number of cases, as in Worcester<sup>121</sup> and Louisville,<sup>122</sup> to petition the council for the enactment of an ordinance increasing the salary of the superintendent.

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<sup>119</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 31, 1858.

<sup>120</sup> Freese, A., *Early History of the Cleveland Public Schools*, pp. 77-79.

<sup>121</sup> Worcester, *Minutes, School Committee*, May 10, 1864.

<sup>122</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 21, 1851.

Control of the salary by the council tended to hinder the development of the profession. Fortunately in the majority of cities the board of education which did the appointing also fixed the salary. Another exceptional case was the situation in Cincinnati during the period of popular election. Here the board of education fixed the salary but did not do the appointing.<sup>123</sup> In Richmond the state paid a salary to the superintendent but the city council could add to it.<sup>124</sup> As a result of such provision, from 1870 to 1900 the salary of the superintendent decreased from \$1650 to \$950. At the same time the board of education was empowered to employ a secretary and fix his salary. They did so and called him secretary and supervisor, at times electing to this office their best superintendents, who had lost their positions due to the political nature of the superintendency.<sup>125</sup> The board of education consistently paid the secretary and supervisor a salary considerably in excess of that which the superintendent received.<sup>126</sup> In San Francisco, while the people elected the superintendent, the superintendent appointed the deputy superintendent and the board of education fixed the salary of the deputy. During the service of John Swett as superintendent, a majority of the board requested him to dismiss his deputy for reasons which he did not consider valid. Thereupon the board reduced the salary of the deputy from "\$250 a month to \$25 hoping that he would resign."<sup>127</sup> After three months, meeting with no success, the board rescinded its action and restored the salary.

The question of the salary of the superintendent cannot be passed without some consideration of the instances in which the superintendency was not a full-time position. This meant that the salary attached to the superintendency

<sup>123</sup> *Ohio Statutes*, 1850. "An Act to Authorize the Appointment of a Superintendent of Common Schools in the City of Cincinnati and for Other Purposes. Passed March 23, 1850."

<sup>124</sup> *Virginia Statutes*, pp. 406-407, 1870-1871.

<sup>125</sup> Richmond, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 25, 1882.

<sup>126</sup> Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 9, 1877-1878; p. 81, 1890-1891.

<sup>127</sup> Swett, J., *Public Education in California. Its Origin and Development, with Personal Reminiscences of Half a Century*, p. 252.

was often very low. In some cases, as in Cleveland above mentioned, Kansas City, Seattle, Providence, and Portland, the superintendent was also a teacher or principal of the high school.<sup>128</sup> In other instances, as in Newark, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Memphis, and Buffalo, the superintendent was not employed full time by the school system in any capacity. These conditions led to many ordinances and resolutions which specified that the superintendent was to give his entire time to the service. Indianapolis is an interesting example of the requiring of only a portion of an individual's time. In 1855 the superintendent was required to visit, and spend a day in, each school each month and to meet the teachers on Saturdays.<sup>129</sup> This required about one third of his time. The following year the superintendent devoted all his time to the work, but in 1858, with the appointment of his successor, one half of the superintendent's time was specified.<sup>130</sup> In 1862 the amount of time became even less, and the superintendent was to give one quarter of his time to the work.<sup>131</sup> The following year the superintendent spent all his time in the service of the schools, and this practice continued from that date.<sup>132</sup>

The salary paid to the superintendent in each of the cities studied is of interest.<sup>133</sup> Of special interest is the low salary paid in many cities during the early years. Los Angeles, making no payments during approximately the first two decades of the existence of the office, leads in this respect. In Jersey City, after the city council had voted the superintendent one hundred dollars in 1853 and 1854, the following year when salaries were determined it was decided that

<sup>128</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 10, 1867; September 17, 1867; Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 19, 1884; Providence, *By-Laws of the School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools*, pp. 10-12, 1848; Portland, (Multnomah County) *Report, County Superintendent of Schools*, p. 5, 1875.

<sup>129</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 2, 1855.

<sup>130</sup> Indianapolis, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, pp. 40-41, 1879.

<sup>131</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, October 17, 1862.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, August 29, 1863.

<sup>133</sup> See Table III, p. 119.

**TABLE III**  
**SALARIES OF SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEN YEAR**  
**INTERVALS<sup>184</sup>**

City	Year						
	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
1. Los Angeles		0	0	0	2000	2500	3300
2. San Francisco		1200	2500	4000	4000	4000	4000
3. Denver				2500	3500	4000	5000
4. New Haven			1000	2700	2700	3500	3500
5. Wilmington				1800	1600	2000	2500
6. Washington				1600	2500	2700	3300
7. Atlanta				2000	1800	2760	3000
8. Savannah				2500	3000	3000	2500
9. Chicago			1500	2500	3000	5000	7000
10. Indianapolis			250	3000	2000	3500	3500
11. Louisville	0	800	1200	1800	3000	3500	3500
12. New Orleans	2500	2000	5000	3400	3000	3000	3500
13. Baltimore				2000	2500	2500	2500
14. Boston		2500	2500	4000	3000	3500	4200
15. Springfield	1000			3000	3000	3500	4000
16. Worcester			1400	2500	2700	3500	4000
17. Detroit			1800	3000	4000	4000	4000
18. Minneapolis				2000	3000	4000	4000
19. Kansas City				2000	2500	3000	3500
20. St. Louis	300	1000	2000	3000	3400	4000	4500
21. Omaha				2000	2400	3600	3600
22. Jersey City		100	0	1000	3000	3500	3500
23. Newark			1000	2500	3000	3500	4500
24. Brooklyn		1000	3000	5000	5000	5000	1855
25. Buffalo	300	1000	1200	1800	3000	3000	3000
26. New York			3000	4750	5500	7500	8000
27. Rochester		500	1200	1975	2500	3000	3500
28. Cincinnati		900	1750	3000	3500	4500	4500
29. Cleveland			1200	2100	4000	3300	5000
30. Portland					1800	2500	3000
31. Philadelphia						5000	5000
32. Pittsburgh				2200	3000	3500	3500
33. Providence	1250	1500	1600	2500	2250	3500	4000
34. Memphis		600	1500	2100	1800	2000	2500
35. Nashville			1500	1500	2000	2500	3000
36. Salt Lake City						2000	3000
37. Richmond				1650	1485	960	960
38. Seattle						2000	3000
39. Milwaukee			1500	2000	2750	3000	3500

<sup>184</sup> In some instances where the salary for the year listed—for example, 1890 was not available, the salary paid either a year or two previous to or following 1890 was cited.

<sup>185</sup> Brooklyn is now (1900) part of Greater New York and has a borough superintendent.

"to the superintendent of schools there shall be no salary, perquisites or fees allowed."<sup>136</sup> A similar resolution was adopted in two succeeding years, after which the superintendent was not mentioned when salaries were fixed.<sup>137</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, is an outstanding exception to the generalization that salaries were extremely low. This was probably due in part to the selection of a nonlocal man and the dependence of the members of the board of education on him due to their lack of experience in educational matters. The committee on teachers considered the appointment of a "principal teacher" as of "the most vital importance." It desired a man with a knowledge of systems of instruction, "especially of that of New England, which has been, it is believed, the basis of all others."<sup>138</sup> Impressed with a letter from Horace Mann recommending John Shaw, of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, the board voted, on November 13, 1841, to employ Shaw as "principal" until August 1, 1842, on the terms suggested by Mann.<sup>139</sup> In notifying Shaw of his election, the following day, the president of the board requested him to secure books and stationery for a hundred boys and a hundred girls, and a sample desk and seat, and to come to New Orleans with the least possible delay as advice was desired concerning the erection of the necessary buildings.<sup>140</sup> Shaw was further requested to keep his eyes open for a competent woman to take charge of the girls' school in case one could not be secured in New Orleans. Shaw accepted the appointment, interviewed Mann, shipped the books desired, drew and forwarded a sketch of a desk, and visited schools in preparation for his duties.<sup>141</sup> Before the end of December, 1841, he was in New

<sup>136</sup> Jersey City, *Charter and Ordinances*, 1851-1862, pp. 181-184; pp. 204-208; pp. 225-229.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 264-268; pp. 276-280; pp. 310-313; pp. 333-336; pp. 369-373.

<sup>138</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2. *Minutes. Board of Education*. November 13, 1841.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, December 20, 1841.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

Orleans, and the schools were organized in rented rooms by the superintendent, aided by two female teachers. The first enrollment which consisted of thirteen pupils of each sex<sup>142</sup> mounted rapidly, and in 1843 Shaw was assisted by two male principals and one assistant, two female principals, and fourteen female assistants. The female assistants received \$300, and Shaw continued at \$2500 per year.<sup>143</sup>

Except for temporary setbacks in a few cases, and the situation in Richmond, which has been accounted for, rather steady increases in salary were made in the majority of cities. Part of the fluctuation in salaries is perhaps attributable to a change in superintendents, a lower salary being paid in most instances to a new superintendent than to one who had served several years. This was not the practice, however, in the case of those cities in which the salary was established by act or ordinance. Financial stringency of a city in a number of instances caused a reduction in the salary of the superintendent.

In conclusion it must be stated that many unclarified situations existed in regard to qualifications, tenure, et cetera, of the superintendents. This was due in part to the relations of the municipal government and the state to the city school system. It was due also to the fact that the city school system was new and growing. The superintendency was a product of growth and during much of the nineteenth century not sufficiently matured to be carefully or completely defined in many aspects. How little defined the duties, for example, of the superintendents were at times is well illustrated by the action of the school committee of Worcester at the last meeting of the year 1856, and the last of their service, in electing a superintendent for the succeeding year. When the school committee of 1857 organized they "voted to hear" the superintendent elected by their predecessors on the subject of his intended duties. Having

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<sup>142</sup> New Orleans, *Annual Report, Board of Education* pp. 4-5, 1860.

<sup>143</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 3, 1843.

heard and questioned him, they approved of his "liberal and just views" and expressed the wish that he accept the office.<sup>144</sup> It was then moved to appoint a committee to fix the duties of the superintendent.

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<sup>144</sup> Worcester, *Minutes, School Committee*, January 6, 1857.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE STATUS OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS WHO SERVED

The *St. Paul Courier*, brooding over the loss of a great superintendent, painted a melancholy picture of the schools and a vivid one of the influence of a superintendent for good or bad:

"The teaching force is badly demoralized both by the return to methods they believe to be obsolete, and by that subtle influence of submission through fear of displacement conjoined with lack of confidence in, respect for, and agreement with a superior capable of making his power felt. Through educational circles over the nation and beyond, this reversion to the ancient has become quickly known and, except for an occasional visit of some investigating educator from abroad to the teachers' training, or the Mechanic Arts School, both retaining, as yet, much of their former standing and methods, the schools are no longer sought by those seeking information in the working of modern pedagogy. At home public sentiment reflects in its despondency the retrogression made and making.

"The sun of memory gilds them yet

But all except that sun is set."<sup>1</sup>

This nineteenth century educator, who had moved on to a larger field of service, must have been of the type of Warren Easton, of New Orleans. So powerful, so worthwhile, so devoted to the cause of education was Easton that while in numerous instances men were elected to the board of education with "avowed antagonistic intentions," he "compelled support where antagonism had been promised."<sup>2</sup> Neither of these men could have been "ordinary" superintendents if Adams spoke the truth in his statement that "the ordinary superintendent is apt to be a grammar school teacher run to seed, or some retired clergyman or local politician out of a job."<sup>3</sup> Nor did their entry into the profession come about in the manner described by Charles

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<sup>1</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 19, p. 520, May, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> Bauer, N., "An Appreciation of Warren Easton as Superintendent of the New Orleans Public Schools." *New Orleans, Public Schools Annals*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Francis Adams, quoted in Philbrick, J. D., "Which Is the True Ideal?" *Education*, Vol. 1, pp. 300-302, January, 1881.



Northend in another city. In this connection Northend relates that the announcement of the decision to establish the office with a very liberal salary had a "wonderful effect. Lawyers, whose business could not 'wane' because it had never 'waxed'; doctors, whose patients were not troublesomely numerous; clergymen, afflicted with bronchitis or some other malady, or not overburdened with hearers; office seekers of various kinds and all sorts of 'do nothings' all became suddenly and wonderfully impressed with the importance of common schools, accompanied by a sort of feeling that in themselves was the only power for truly elevating those schools."<sup>4</sup> He attributes to men of this type, who were "urged, or who crowded themselves into offices," much of the "jar and friction" found in school affairs.

Aaron Gove, at the close of the century, stated that few pilgrims had followed the trail of the city superintendent persistently, and that "of the hundreds that have struck it most have left it for another prospect." The roll of names is short. Various callings have furnished recruits; commercial, mercantile, professional and industrial vocations have each sent representatives to join the tramping throng. "The causes for striking the trail and the reasons for leaving are well in sight. Inadequate preparation has been potent in forcing desertion. Neither scholarship nor executive ability alone has been found ample for permanent occupation."<sup>5</sup>

Generalizations of this type warrant a study of the superintendents. Research in connection with this problem is necessary also for a fuller understanding of the duties of the superintendent than would be possible otherwise. The previous occupation of the men who became superintendents and the factors causing the turnover which occurred in each of the cities studied are of significance.

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<sup>4</sup> Connecticut, *Common School Journal and Annals of Education*, Vol. 8, August, 1860.

<sup>5</sup> National Education Association, *Addresses and Journal of Proceedings*, p. 215, 1900.

Consideration will be given first to the positions held by superintendents before they entered the superintendency.<sup>6</sup> In determining the number of superintendents any city had, each time the superintendency exchanged hands a new superintendent is considered as having taken office. Thus, while Rochester is credited with a total of nineteen superintendents, it actually had five or six less than this number in office, for, on account of a change in the political complexion of the board of education, the man who failed to be reelected one year was, in several instances, returned to office after the succeeding election of members of the board of education two years later. The first group of superintendents to be considered includes those who served formerly as principal, assistant superintendent, supervisor, or superintendent in the local system. More superintendents secured entrance to the superintendency through these channels than any other. Partly responsible for the leadership were the qualifications established by act, ordinance, or regulation which have been discussed.<sup>7</sup> In Baltimore, for example all superintendents were drawn from this field. San Francisco and Buffalo, with popularly elected officers, also called most of their men from local principalships. In addition to laws, ordinances, and resolutions, however, there was frequently a feeling that the office should go to a local man, and in some instances to a man connected with the system. Expressions to this effect were found in Brooklyn, Providence, Washington, and Omaha. The Brooklyn *Evening Star* in 1848, when the first superintendent was to be appointed, asked the board of education to judge the applicants, "not by the array of influences which may be exerted to secure the office to some friend or partisan favorite, but alone having reference to the legitimate object of the appointment."<sup>8</sup> A few days later an article signed

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<sup>6</sup> See Table IV, pp 126-127.

<sup>7</sup> *Ante*, pp. 89-122.

<sup>8</sup> Brooklyn, *Evening Star*, March 4, 1848.

**TABLE IV**  
**SUPERINTENDENTS: POSITION HELD PREVIOUS TO SUPERINTENDENCY, TENURE, FACTORS**  
**INFLUENTIAL IN TURNOVER**

CITY	PART A				PART B				PART C						
	Position Held Previous to Superintendency				Tenure: Six Months or More Counted As One Year				Factors Influential in Turnover						
	Principal, Assistant Supt., Supervisor, or Former Supt. in Local System	Educator, Not Connected with Local System	Member of Board of Education	Professions, Trades, Etc., Other than Education	Unknown	Total Superintendents of Century	Years of Service of Supt. Who Served Shortest Period. None Recorded under 1 Year	Average Years of Service (Mean)	Years of Service of Superintendent Who Served Longest Period	Failed to Be Re-elected	Resignation (Voluntary)	Death	Dismissal, Involuntary Resignation, Failure to Be Re-elected if Charges Preferred	Continuing in Service at End of Century	Total Superintendents of Century
Los Angeles	6	2	1	13	2	23	1	2	8	17	4	1		1	23
San Francisco	15	1	1	2	2	20	1	2	4	18		1		1	20
Denver	1	1	1		1	8	1	10	26	2				1	8
New Haven	2	4	1			7	1	6	16		7				7
Wilmington		1	1			1	29	29	29			1			1
Washington	1	2	1			4	1	8	15	1	2		1		4
Atlanta	1	1	1			4	8	14	21		1				4
Savannah	3	1	1			4	1	8	28	2	1		2		4
Chicago	2	4			1	7	2	7	13		5			1	7
Indianapolis	2	4			3	9	1	5	10	4	5				9
Louisville	5	1		2	7	14	1	4	31	10	2	1		1	14
New Orleans	7		4		8	18	1	4	13	7	5			1	18
Baltimore	4				3	4	2	9	18	1	1	1	1		4

Continued on next page

TABLE IV—Continued

CITY	PART A						PART B			PART C					
	Position Held Previous to Superintendency						Tenure: Six Months or More Counted As One Year			Factors Influential in Turnover					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6
Boston	2	2				4	2	12	22		3			1	4
Springfield		3		1		4	2	9	15	1	2			1	4
Worcester		2	2		1	5	2	8	26	1	2		1	1	5
Detroit	3	2		1		6	1	6	11	2	3		1	1	6
Minneapolis	3	1		1	1	5	1	7	15	2	1			1	5
Kansas City	1	2			1	4	1	8	26	3				1	4
St. Louis	3	1			8	12	1	5	15	7	2	1	1	1	12
Omaha	1	7				8	1	3	9	4	3			1	8
Jersey City	5		3		2	10	1	5	12	4	3	2		1	10
Newark	2	1	1			4	6	12	19	4	3			1	4
Brooklyn	3	2	1		1	7	1	7	18	3	1	2		1	7
Buffalo	12			6	6	24	1	3	8	19	4			1	24
New York	2	2				4	3	12	21	1	2			1	4
Rochester	9		3		7	19	1	3	10	13	5			1	19
Cincinnati	4	1	2	1	1	9	1	5	12	7	2			1	9
Cleveland	3	5				8	2	6	15	4	3			1	8
Portland	4					4	3	7	11	3				1	4
Philadelphia		2				2	8	8	9		1			1	2
Pittsburgh	2					2	1	16	31	1	3			1	2
Providence		4				2	4	15	29		3			1	4
Memphis	3		5	3	5	16	1	3	13	12	3			1	16
Nashville	5	1	1			7	1	7	16	8	4			1	7
Salt Lake City	1					1	9	9	9	1	1			1	1
Richmond	3	1	1		1	6	1	5	11	3	1	1		1	6
Seattle	1	2				3	2	6	10	2				1	3
Milwaukee	6		5	1	1	13	1	3	9	8	3	1		1	13
TOTAL	125	61	32	30	54	302				165	88	13	6	30	302

"Second Ward" urged the appointment of a local principal as follows:

"Much has been said here and elsewhere about elevating the teachers' profession. The board of education has now an opportunity of elevating a teacher and the teachers' profession; for if this appointment should be given to one of the public school teachers, an act of but simple justice would be performed and the teachers of the public schools generally would feel that they had received a compliment in having one of their number appointed superintendent. They might be encouraged in the discharge of their duty by the thought that as one of their numbers had been honored with such a mark of confidence, possibly the precedent might be followed and in time the discovery would be made that teachers are capable of performing other duties than those pertaining to the mere drudgery of the schoolroom."<sup>9</sup>

In Providence, when the resignation of S. S. Greene as superintendent was announced, a letter addressed to the editor of the *Providence Journal* asked that the schools be guarded against a "foreign complexion" and "undue and untoward influence from without" in their supervision and administration. It stated further:

"When we want a judge or other officer to administer our laws and preside over our institutions we take a resident of our city or state, who understands our laws, customs and character. There is reason in this practice.

"Now, I ask, should not the office of school superintendent be regarded in the same light as that to which I have pointed? Does not such an officer need to be conversant at the outset, not only with schools in general but with the Providence system of schools in particular, and with the habits, manners and customs of the Providence people? Is not going abroad for a superintendent equivalent to saying that our school system is essentially defective, having failed to train, after many years of trial, a suitable man for this high and responsible office?"<sup>10</sup>

In Washington, in response to a protest by many citizens when Powell was called from Iowa to the superintendency a school trustee wrote:

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<sup>9</sup> Brooklyn, *Evening Star*, March 6, 1848.

<sup>10</sup> Providence, *Journal*, February 13, 1855.

"Home rule when applied to the appointment of a school superintendent is senseless. A superintendent is not a 'ruler' and should never try to be one.

"The same business principles which apply in ordinary matters of life should be used in the management of the schools . . . Did Princeton lower her standard of excellence when she called Dr. McCosh from beyond the seas? . . . Are taxes levied to give employment to men or to educate the children? One half of the expense of our schools is paid by the people of the United States but to this infraction of the principles of home rule we hear no protest."<sup>11</sup>

In Omaha the first superintendent, an educator from outside of the city, resigned to accept a superintendency in a larger city and the board of education elected a local man. The *Daily Herald* accepted the opportunity to suggest that the first superintendent accomplished little for good, and that the board of Education, in electing a "home man," was undoubtedly pursuing a "sound policy."<sup>12</sup> Having gone so far, however, the editor was evidently not so certain of the correctness of his opinion, for he continued that it was his belief that no one would have cause to regret the election of the home man "unless—unless, we say, the new superintendent should fall into the error of permitting officious meddlers in the board and among teachers to influence him to carry into his administration the personal and other prejudices that have grown out of former disgraceful wrangles."

When B. A. Hinsdale failed to be reelected superintendent in Cleveland in 1886 and L. W. Day was elected in his stead, the *Plain Dealer* considered the election of Day "a deserved reward of long, faithful and efficient service."<sup>13</sup> Day had served nearly a score of years in all the grades and, according to the *Plain Dealer*, "No one is so thoroughly acquainted with the work of the schools and their requirements as he is, for no one else has had so long and intimate connection with them." Upon the resignation of W. T. Harris as super-

<sup>11</sup> Washington, *Evening Star*, June 24, 1885.

<sup>12</sup> Omaha, *Daily Herald*, July 8, 1874.

<sup>13</sup> Cleveland, *Plain Dealer*, June 2, 1886.

intendent in St. Louis, the board of education elected E. H. Long, who had been assistant superintendent, as his successor, attaching great weight to "experience in the details of the management of the public schools."<sup>14</sup>

The Brooklyn board of education elected a local principal as superintendent in 1862, and the *Daily Eagle* editorially commented that it was "manifestly right to give the preference to one of our public school principals, unless it appeared that some other applicant had an aptitude and capacity not found among them. . . . The superintendency is a prize which ought to be held before the eyes of the principals as a stimulus to exertion in their calling . . . . Moreover there is advantage in having a superintendent who knows the teachers and principals . . . . It would take a newcomer a year, and perhaps years, to get familiar with all the ins and outs of the personnel of the schools of a city so large as Brooklyn, not to mention a good many other peculiarities of local tradition and affiliation."<sup>15</sup>

While the local man often received consideration, he did not always do so. The *Detroit Free Press*, for instance, felt that "other things being equal, the promotion of a principal or other teacher in one of the Detroit public schools to the superintendency thereof would be a graceful and wholesome act."<sup>16</sup> A little later, however, when the board of education was about to elect Principal Robinson, superintendent in Detroit, in preference to Dr. Peaslee, superintendent of Cincinnati public schools, the *Free Press* did not consider other things equal and made a violent attack on Robinson, maintaining that "his experience as an educator is limited to a few years of not remarkably successful principalship in a union school. In all the assurance that gives of the capacity in superintendents' duties he might just as well have spent the time in a plumber's shop or stove foundry. Of proved capabilities or experience he has absolutely none;

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<sup>14</sup> St. Louis, *Daily Globe Democrat*, May 12, 1880.

<sup>15</sup> Brooklyn, *Daily Eagle*, February 11, 1882.

<sup>16</sup> Detroit, *Free Press*, August 11, 1886.

and if he were the only man in the field his candidacy would be entitled to no consideration. Against the candidacy of a thoroughly equipped and experienced educator and superintendent like Dr. Peaslee it is simply preposterous."<sup>17</sup> These were not the convictions of the board of education, however, and Robinson was elected.

In this case the qualifications of the two men may have warranted such a stand, but there were instances in which residence in a community did not insure election and even served as a bar to election. In Cleveland, for example, the school director stated that "this organization could be accomplished more impartially and effectually by a stranger who would be entirely independent of the local influence, which I knew would be strongly exerted, if permitted, to prevent thorough action."<sup>18</sup> He desired, and appointed, as superintendent a man "who would have no prejudices and no friendships to stand in the way of independent action."<sup>19</sup> After two years' experience the school director stated that his opinions and impressions had been "confirmed and conclusively proved" and that his action had been a very proper one. Superintendent Jones considered this action as having "gone farther than anything else to establish the principle that the office is not to be awarded to 'claimants,' that it is not to be sought so much as it is to seek the incumbent, and that he who invokes political influence to secure it is unworthy of it."<sup>20</sup>

This brings us to a consideration of educators not connected with the local school system who were elected superintendents. Providence and Philadelphia both secured all their superintendents in this manner. A considerable number of the outstanding superintendents are found in this category. It includes Greenwood, of Kansas City; Gove, of Denver; Bishop, Greene, Leach, and Tarbell, of Providence; Rickoff, Hinsdale, and L. H. Jones, of Cleveland; McAlister,

<sup>17</sup> Detroit, *Free Press*, August 26, 1886.

<sup>18</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 22-23, 1894.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.



of Philadelphia; Randall, of New York; and Marble of Worcester. These men compare favorably with the outstanding men contributed through the principalship—men like Philbrick, of Boston; Harris and Soldan, of St. Louis; Buckley, of Brooklyn; and Dutton, of New Haven.

Superintendents who secured entrance to the superintendency through membership in the board of education constitute another group. In general, these were some of the earliest superintendents. An outstanding exception was the election of Milton Noyes as superintendent in Rochester, in 1892, after nearly twenty years of service on the board of education.<sup>21</sup> The general situation was similar to that experienced by Congar, of Newark, who was president of the board and a very active member for a number of years. When the superintendency was established he remained a member acting as president of the board and superintendent of schools at the same time.<sup>22</sup> The office did not require full-time service and it was not made a full-time position until his resignation in 1859.<sup>23</sup> It should not be inferred from this case, however, that when a member of the board of education became the superintendent, he generally remained a member of the board. In the majority of cases, upon his election to the superintendency he submitted his resignation as member of the board, as the offices were not considered compatible. In Memphis, in the sixties and seventies a number of the superintendents were men who had previously served as members of the board of visitors. Elder and Leath passed from the presidency of the board to the superintendency of the schools.<sup>24</sup> Among the twenty members of the board of visitors in 1867-1868 were two

<sup>21</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 111, 1893.

<sup>22</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 23-24, 1857.

<sup>23</sup> Newark, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 5, 1859; January 25, 1859; March 3, 1859, he resigned from the board of education and the superintendency.

<sup>24</sup> Young, J. P., *History of Memphis*, pp. 398-417; Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, p. 3, 1867-1868; Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Visitors*, July 25, 1869.

future superintendents and a former superintendent.<sup>25</sup> The outstanding man who entered the superintendency through this avenue was McAlister, of Milwaukee, who was later the first superintendent in Philadelphia. McAlister had been a teacher, had studied law, and was enjoying a prosperous law business in Milwaukee, when he was chosen president of the board of education.<sup>26</sup> So thoroughly did he become interested in the schools that when a vacancy occurred in the superintendency he was elected to that office, and as a result of his outstanding work in that capacity was invited to go to Philadelphia.<sup>27</sup>

The Brooklyn board of education in 1873,<sup>28</sup> after a fruitless search for a superintendent, elected one of its own members who had long been associated with municipal affairs, having served for twenty years as city surveyor and for seven years as assessor. He hesitated before accepting on account of his business and political duties and the instability of the tenure of the superintendent, but he finally did accept.

Many of the members of the board of education who were elected to the superintendency were professional men. Very often professional men who were elected superintendents had had less contact with the schools than came through being a principal, an outside educator, or even a member of the board of education. Los Angeles leads in this category, having selected thirteen of her twenty-three superintendents from this professional group. These thirteen superintendents included five lawyers, two doctors, two

<sup>25</sup> Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, p. 5, 1867-1868. J. T. Leath and H. C. Slaughter became superintendents in 1869 and 1872, respectively. A. H. Merrill had served as superintendent from 1855 to 1857 and from 1861 to 1862. From 1872 to 1875 W. Z. Mitchell, who had served as superintendent from 1865 to 1869, was a member of the board of visitors.

<sup>26</sup> Andreas, A. T., *History of Milwaukee*, p. 531.

<sup>27</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners*, p. 5, 1873; p. 3, 1874; p. 36, 1876; *Proceedings, Board of Commissioners*, April 3, 1883.

<sup>28</sup> Brooklyn, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 1, 1873; July 8, 1873; Brooklyn, *Daily Eagle*, July 9, 1873.

clergymen, two merchants, one transportation and shipping leader, one accountant and bookkeeper, all of whom held office before Los Angeles had a superintendent drawn from any of the other sources which have been considered. The third superintendent was a doctor and a versatile genius who had a "penchant for pioneering. He started the first drug store, opened the first auction house, established the first nursery, and introduced the first ornamental trees and shrubbery into Los Angeles. He had a genius, too, for office-holding. He was collectively postmaster, school superintendent, coroner, and city marshall. Whether it was his familiarity with letters or his experience in a nursery that suggested to the council his fitness for school superintendent, the records do not show."<sup>29</sup> Los Angeles' superintendents included noted politicians and lawyers, one of whom was the first attorney-general of California. One of San Francisco's superintendents was a business man who, because he had never been a teacher, attended to official business duties and turned over to John Swett,<sup>30</sup> his assistant superintendent, the revision of the rules and regulations of the school department, the supervision of instruction, the revision of the curriculum, the preparation of the annual report, and other educational details. Springfield had a superintendent who was formerly a bank cashier.<sup>31</sup>

The Detroit board of education, in 1865, elected Duane Doty, a newspaper editor, as superintendent. While the *Free Press* considered Doty, one of its former editors, "eminently qualified for the position,"<sup>32</sup> the *Advertiser and Tribune* attacked him as one who would greatly impair the "success and usefulness" of the public schools because he was a "most bigoted partisan" and "an old political editor,"

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<sup>29</sup> Guinn, J. M., "Pioneer School Superintendents of Los Angeles." *Historical Society of Southern California, Publications*, Vol. 4, pp. 76-81.

<sup>30</sup> Swett, J., *Public Education in California. Its Origin and Development with Personal Reminiscences of Half a Century*, pp. 206-207.

<sup>31</sup> Springfield, *Daily Republican*, January 5, 1865.

<sup>32</sup> Detroit, *Free Press*, July 20, 1865; July 23, 1865.

who had "written columns in denunciation of the efforts of the government to suppress the rebellion and denounced the lieutenant general of our armies as a humbug and, in consequence of atheistic opinions, publicly derided Thanksgiving Day."<sup>33</sup> Doty later went to Chicago as assistant superintendent. Pickard resigned as superintendent, protesting that Doty "marked out for himself an independent course of action, of the work he has required of others, without even asking the consent or approval of the superintendent."<sup>34</sup> He stated that he was frequently called upon to explain blanks in the schools of "the existence of which he had not the slightest knowledge" and that Doty had even instructed clerks "to allow no one" to see certain blanks which were prepared in the office and circulated throughout the schools. Doty denied most of these charges,<sup>35</sup> regretted the course he had taken in certain cases, and assured the board there would be no cause for complaint in the future. Pickard would not withdraw his resignation, however, and the board elected Doty superintendent, whereupon the *Daily Tribune* bitterly commented that "for once, vaulting ambition leaped just about the right height."<sup>36</sup> The *Daily Tribune* had previously stated editorially that the only question was whether the board "shall appropriate enough to pay Mr. Doty's transportation back to Detroit."<sup>37</sup>

The Milwaukee board of education selected a newspaper editor as superintendent in 1862, but he served only a few months. At the time of his election the *Daily Sentinel* stated that all his interference in the schools "will be only to their detriment and that what would be a great disqualification in a good man will be his chief merit—that his entire want of industry and application to anything will probably prevent him from interfering with the school

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<sup>33</sup> Detroit, *Advertiser and Tribune*, July 10, 1865; July 22, 1865.

<sup>34</sup> Chicago, *Proceedings, Board of Education*, June 28, 1877.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, July 12, 1877.

<sup>36</sup> Chicago, *Daily Tribune*, September 14, 1877.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, June 29, 1877.

department any further than to draw his regular salary."<sup>38</sup>

Another superintendent who had no former contact with the schools was Fox, who was first elected superintendent in Buffalo in 1877. He was a yard foreman for a large contractor and Republican political leader. The *Daily Courier*, a Democratic paper, claimed that "school work is a profession requiring special knowledge and experience" and that Fox had "no knowledge of school affairs, . . . no qualification for the office of superintendent which would not equally fit him for judge, or government architect, or a general of brigade. He could neither teach nor manage a school for a week, and six hours would more than exhaust his store of knowledge and patience. He could not himself examine applicants for positions; he knows nothing of the educational tendencies and movements of the day."<sup>39</sup> Stating that Fox was a "respectable gentleman," and that his employer might gain, since it "might facilitate his business to a great extent; it might aid him in securing larger contracts and better prices than he would otherwise obtain,"<sup>40</sup> the *Daily Courier*, insisted that the people "would be made to bleed more freely than ever before" and that such a situation was not desired. His qualifications were not considered as strong as those of an earlier Democratic nominee for the superintendency, of whom the *Commercial Advertiser* said that no qualifications could be imagined unless it be from "a sanitary point of view, for vaccination . . . Dr. Garvin has claims to the place."<sup>41</sup> Both these men were elected; the one resigned after a short period; the other never submitted annual reports, although they were required by law. A taxpayer inferred that this failure to submit annual reports was due to incompetency.<sup>42</sup>

Before the matter of tenure is discussed, a few more data will be presented concerning the qualifications of superin-

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<sup>38</sup> Milwaukee, *Daily Sentinel*, April 28, 1862.

<sup>39</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Courier*, November 5, 1877.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, November 3, 1877.

<sup>41</sup> Buffalo, *Commercial Advertiser*, October 21, 1863.

<sup>42</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Courier*, October 24, 1879.

tendents, particularly from the viewpoint of the press. The New Haven *Evening Register* opposed the appointment of Samuel T. Dutton on the ground that it was due to the democratic majority of New Haven that no "narrow-minded and bigoted republican partisan should be placed at the head of the schools."<sup>43</sup> Sackett, a school principal, was opposed for the superintendency in Buffalo on the ground that he was "a school-teacher, and should not be a politician."<sup>44</sup> That the teachers themselves held this view may be inferred from the statement made by Sackett when he was superintendent to the effect that he had to keep constantly in mind the fact that teachers looked upon "the elevation of one of their number to the superintendency with feelings of uneasiness and distrust, having been taught by politicians that a teacher was not the proper person to be placed at the head of the school department, on account of the professional jealousies which may at times have existed among them."<sup>45</sup>

How thoroughly political the selection of superintendents often was is revealed by the procedure of a political party convention<sup>46</sup> in Buffalo. The Republican and American parties were in joint convention. Balloting took place for a superintendent of schools and a Republican educator was nominated, whereupon it was explained that the office, having been previously filled by a Republican, should go this time to an American. The chairman, in astonishment at the result, asked the convention to reconsider. The convention did so and nominated, almost unanimously, a doctor. During the same year the press, which related the above facts, voiced the opinion that school affairs were drifting into a dangerous channel and that if conditions continued a little longer, with "the alliance of teachers for or against political parties becoming a recognized fact, only one result can fol-

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<sup>43</sup> New Haven, *Evening Register*, November 18, 1881.

<sup>44</sup> Buffalo, *Commercial Advertiser*, October 24, 1861.

<sup>45</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Public Schools*, p. 110, 1862.

<sup>46</sup> Buffalo, *Commercial Advertiser*, October 24, 1859.

low. With every change in a city administration will come an entire change in the corps of teachers made on political considerations only."<sup>47</sup> In Baltimore a political assessment of two per cent was made on the salaries of the paid officers of the board. The officers, including the superintendent, refused to pay and, when the prevention of their reelection was threatened, they brought the matter to the attention of the board of commissioners.<sup>48</sup> The board adopted a resolution endorsing the conduct of the superintendent by a vote of 13 to 5.<sup>49</sup>

The *Daily Republican* of Springfield stated that "a man who has merely had a general 'interest in education' and can do nothing but utter the prevailing platitudes on the subject will be worse than useless,"<sup>50</sup> while a letter to *The New York Teacher* urged "ambitious aspirants . . . hereafter to cultivate the outside instead of the inside of the head, as beauty seems to be more in demand, just now, than brains." This comment was directed at a certain city in New York State which failed to elect as superintendent one of the best-known educators in the state because a "serious objection was made to him on the ground that he was not good-looking enough!"<sup>51</sup> The *Chicago Daily Tribune* poked much fun at the board of education for its attempt to retain Howland as superintendent largely because of his classical abilities. It considered absurd the thought that "a high degree of classical education is a *sine qua non* for the position of superintendent,"<sup>52</sup> and urged that, while knowledge of the classics should be no bar against a candidate, "familiarity with modern education, its new methods of organization and administration, a sympathy with the advanced methods of grading, instruction, and discipline, executive ability and knowledge of the business" are much more

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, November 3, 1859.

<sup>48</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, November 27, 1877.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, December 4, 1877.

<sup>50</sup> Springfield, *Daily Republican*, November 16, 1864.

<sup>51</sup> *The New York Teacher*, p. 128, Vol. 2, February, 1854.

<sup>52</sup> Chicago, *Daily Tribune*, September 4, 1891.

worthy of stress. The *Daily Tribune* further warned that the people would not tolerate the appointment of a man with "pull." The election of A. G. Lane followed and when, in 1898, he failed to be reelected, the *Daily Tribune* claimed that it was because he was a "sound money man" and the introduction of "free silver into the Chicago public schools" was desired by the mayor and political leaders.<sup>53</sup> The election went to E. B. Andrews, president of Brown University, who had become a conspicuous figure in 1896 as a result of his "enthusiastic advocacy of the 16 to 1 free silver plank of the Democratic platform."<sup>54</sup>

Another interesting superintendent was DeWolf, of Milwaukee. When he was reelected in 1863, after some opposition, one of the members of the board offered a resolution "requiring the correction in the orthography of the minutes" since DeWolf was keeping them. Before action was taken on the resolution a motion to adjourn prevailed. One historian spoke of him as a "literary gem" and a "blatant politician," as a man elected to the superintendency as a "natural result of bringing the public schools into the cesspool of politics."<sup>55</sup> The *Daily Sentinel* held that DeWolf was an honest, well-meaning man, "entirely out of his beat" as superintendent. It continued: "All this comes of prostituting this office to politics. And we hope the gentleman, or gentlemen, who a year ago decreed that it should be put up in the political auction room, to be knocked off to the highest bidder—the one who does the most for the party—irrespective of any fitness for the place, will be satisfied with the working of the scheme."<sup>56</sup> With superintendents of the types here considered, occasionally securing their positions through agents of textbook companies,<sup>57</sup> one can agree with the *Buffalo Daily Courier* that at times it amounted to worse than continuing "mediocrity in a high

<sup>53</sup> Chicago, *Daily Tribune*, p. 6, July 14, 1898.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> Buck, J. S., *Milwaukee Under the Charter from 1854-1860*, p. 79.

<sup>56</sup> Milwaukee, *Daily Sentinel*, April 30, 1863.

<sup>57</sup> Cleveland, *Herald*, May 23, 1882.



position" for it was giving "downright inferiority continued charge of public education."<sup>58</sup>

The tenure of the superintendents is a factor which had much to do with their relationships and achievements.<sup>59</sup> The number of cities in which the shortest tenure was one year or less is rather striking. Of special interest are the long tenures, such as those of Gove in Denver, Harlan in Wilmington, Baker in Savannah, Tingley in Louisville, Marble in Worcester, Greenwood in Kansas City, Luckey in Pittsburgh, and Leach in Providence. It might be noted that these men served twenty-five or more years each. They had a real opportunity to achieve, compared to that of the superintendent who enjoyed the longest tenure of any in San Francisco, namely, four years, or compared to that of the superintendent whose tenure was shortest in the city each represents.

A study of the average years of service which the superintendents in each city experienced presents another view of the tenure situation. The number of cities in which the average tenure was two, three, four, or even a few more, years certainly makes evident the fact that many cities did not have sufficiently long tenure to permit the superintendents to assume responsibility and to be weighed on the merits of their achievements. There were very few superintendents whose tenure was long enough to enable the formulation and attempt at execution of any policies in which the superintendent may have believed.

The indefiniteness of tenure is revealed by the experience of Hiskey as superintendent of the West Division of Minneapolis. Tenure was insecure in this instance in part, because of the questionable action of the outgoing members of the board of education. Hiskey was elected on July 14, 1868, for the ensuing year. A few days later the new members of the board of education came into office and a resolution

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<sup>58</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Courier*, October 30, 1875.

<sup>59</sup> See Table IV, pp. 126-127, Part B.

was offered rescinding the action of the board.<sup>60</sup> This occurred on July 30, 1868, and failed to pass by a vote of 2 to 2. On August 6, 1868, a similar move was made, which failed by the same vote. This is evidence of the conception of tenure held by one board of education, which certainly could be little short of ruinous in its results. In speaking of short tenure, Swett aptly remarked: "There can be no progress in public schools without long-continued, systematic efforts; and there can be no system when one set of school officials succeeds another as often as the seasons change. By the time one set of school officers has learned something about the condition and wants of the school, by some change in the politics of the city or town, a new set succeeds, bent on reforming the work of their predecessors."<sup>61</sup> Cubberley pointed to the "eminent services of Mann in Massachusetts, of McCosh, of Princeton, of Eliot, of Harvard, and of Harris at Washington" as "sufficient evidences of what can be achieved when an element of permanency accompanies an appointment."<sup>62</sup>

The short tenure of superintendents was due to the operation of several factors and conditions.<sup>63</sup> The poor training or lack of training of the incumbents has already been suggested as one of the causes. Politics, which Superintendent Jones, of Cleveland, called "the most horrible curse that ever spread its blighting influence over the public schools,"<sup>64</sup> has also been considered. Death and the challenge of higher or different fields of work also exerted an influence. By far the greatest number of vacancies in the superintendency were due to failure on the part of the board of education to reelect the incumbent. Failure to reelect

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<sup>60</sup> Minneapolis, West Division, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 30, 1868.

<sup>61</sup> Swett, J., "The Examination of Teachers." *National Education Association, Addresses and Journal of Proceedings*, p. 76, 1872.

<sup>62</sup> Cubberley, E. P., "School Organization." *Educational Review*, Vol. 13, pp. 167-170, February, 1897.

<sup>63</sup> See Table IV, pp. 126-127, Part C.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted by Cubberley, E. P., "School Organization." *Educational Review*, Vol. 13, pp. 169-170, February, 1897.

was the most prevalent manner of dismissing superintendents, because it was the easiest way of making the office vacant. Dismissals as such were more likely to receive considerable publicity. In addition, with a tenure of only one year in a great majority of cases, the members of the boards did not have long to wait to reward their friends, secure a better superintendent, or satisfy whatever other purpose they had in mind.

So rapid was the turnover in Virginia that it was stated in the *Virginia Educational Journal* that "an officer hardly has time to post himself in the school laws or to make acquaintance of the teachers and subordinates under him before there comes a turn of the political wheel which throws him out of position and puts in his place a new man, to undergo in a few years a similar experience."<sup>65</sup> In agreement with this thought, in announcing the appointment of new superintendents, the *Journal* continued: "Of course the selection of new men does not indicate that the present incumbents are not efficient—their faithful services and great success in the work prove that they are—but it is attributable to the change in administration and a difference in political opinions."<sup>66</sup>

In San Francisco and Buffalo, where election was by popular vote, such turnover can easily be understood and was to be expected. It is also easily understood in Los Angeles and Louisville, while the city councils did the electing, for the councils failed to view the position as one to be filled by a highly trained educator. In the majority of other cases the chief cause was the change in membership of the boards of education or lack of appreciation by members of the board of the desirability of long tenure.

Mention will be made of a few outstanding failures to re-elect. Bradley, prominent educator of Albany, was brought to Minneapolis in 1886, where he served for six years until the election of Jordan. The *Tribune* stated that the grounds

<sup>65</sup> *Virginia Educational Journal*, Vol. 20, pp. 120-123, March, 1889.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 17, p. 130, March, 1886.

for this action were known "only to the breasts of the board members" and that Bradley, in "parting, may go with the conviction that it was not the voice of the citizens of Minneapolis, nor the interests of education, that caused his defeat."<sup>67</sup> In the same issue of the paper, in a report on the board of education meeting, it was stated that the director who was believed to have led the movement against Bradley, when asked the reason for this action, replied: "Why, there was no particular reason, further than that the board desired to make a change . . . There were no particular charges against Dr. Bradley, and as he has had the place for two terms it does not seem to me that he should complain."

The Cincinnati *Daily Gazette* in 1874 commented that John Hancock "is learning by experience that there is truth in the old saw which ascribes ingratitude to republics" and that it "is better to be one's own master than dependent on the favor of a school board."<sup>68</sup> John Peaslee was elected superintendent at this time, and in 1886 the president of the board of election explained the failure to reelect him by stating that in 1874 the "board of education determined that it would be for the interest of the schools to make a change and introduce new blood into their management." As a consequence Hancock had been dropped and Peaslee elected. The present board believed that the "reason which actuated the board in 1874 would again avail,"<sup>69</sup> and therefore determined upon a change. E. E. White accepted election in place of Peaslee, although protesting against the action of the board. In accepting, he stated that he expected the coöperation of parents, trustees, principals, and teachers, and if disappointed in those expectations he had "the privilege of resigning."<sup>70</sup> Before exercising that "privi-

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<sup>67</sup> Minneapolis, *Tribune*, March 30, 1892.

<sup>68</sup> Cincinnati, *Daily Gazette*, June 17, 1874.

<sup>69</sup> Cincinnati, "Report of the President of the Board." *Annual Report, Board of Education*, 1886.

<sup>70</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 7, 1886.

lege," however, he followed in 1889, in the footsteps of his predecessors.

When the dropping of A. J. Rickoff was rumored in Cleveland in 1882, the *Herald* claimed that at no time had Rickoff either "refused to execute the orders of the board or executed them in a half-hearted way," and that for the mistakes which had been made the board was responsible, and that it was not complimenting itself when it alleged "that Mr. Rickoff, the servant of the board was its master and dictator."<sup>71</sup> In Worcester the culmination of a fight which had "been maintained with more or less persistency for nearly twenty years against superintendent of schools, A. P. Marble,"<sup>72</sup> was the election of Carroll as superintendent in 1894. The dropping of Search in Los Angeles has been recounted.<sup>73</sup> On the night on which this action occurred one member of the board who had just returned from a tour in the eastern part of the United States asked the privilege of reading a few letters concerning the capabilities of Search as an educator, even though he understood "that the guillotine is prepared, the machinery greased and that all things are ready."<sup>74</sup> Dr. William Hailman, of Washington, D. C., who served as superintendent in Los Angeles for one month immediately preceding Search, suggested by letter that "the city choose a change of name" since "its present appellation appears under the conditions a great hypocrisy."<sup>75</sup>

The *Seattle Daily Press* regarded the dropping of the first local superintendent as possibly a change for the better. It quoted the remark of a well-known city educator: "The action of the school board reminds me very much of the farmer who after many years of faithful work unhitched the old horse from the plow and turned him out on the public highway, put in a colt, but while attempting to hitch the latter,

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<sup>71</sup> Cleveland, *Herald*, May 22, 1882.

<sup>72</sup> Worcester, *Daily Spy*, March 14, 1894.

<sup>73</sup> *Ante*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>74</sup> Los Angeles, *Daily Times*, June 21, 1895.

<sup>75</sup> Los Angeles, *Sunday Times*, June 23, 1895.

received a severe kick.”<sup>76</sup> When, in 1882, the superintendent of Omaha was not reelected, the *Weekly Herald* noted that the board of education was pretty evenly divided on the question but stated that such division would cause “no uneasiness” as it was only the “normal condition” of the board.<sup>77</sup> The *Weekly Republican* regarded it as evidence that Omaha had not yet been relieved of an incompetent board of education with which it had been burdened many years and advised:

“We would take this opportunity to remind the school board that they are servants not masters . . . . They are not elected to wrangle, dispute and scheme . . . . They are also to remember that changes in teachers, and especially in superintendents, are ill-advised unless in case of manifest incompetency. Changes upset all order and method, new experiments are tried, and the schools suffer. Nor can a man have a fair chance to show his ability except after several years of trial; of course we would not advocate the retention of an incompetent superintendent . . . but no one claims that our late superintendent was incompetent . . . .

“Gentlemen of the board of education, such changes are ruinous, retarding the progress of the schools, and preventing any first-class man from accepting the position of superintendent of public instruction in the city of Omaha.”<sup>78</sup>

In 1894, when A. P. Marble was secured as superintendent of Omaha the *Herald* congratulated Omaha.<sup>79</sup> Less than a year later Marble was dropped when the board of education “believed” that it had found a man with higher qualifications. The board members asserted that the new superintendent was much younger and that he had “advanced western ideas which he carries into effect with western energy and determination.”<sup>80</sup>

The resignations of superintendents, in the main, fall into two categories. The first is resignation because of retirement from the profession, due either to age or to the desire

<sup>76</sup> Seattle, *Daily Press*, July 19, 1888.

<sup>77</sup> Omaha, *Weekly Herald*, July 7, 1882.

<sup>78</sup> Omaha, *Weekly Republican*, p. 5, July 14, 1882.

<sup>79</sup> Omaha, *Morning World Herald*, September 4, 1894.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, July 23, 1895.

to enter some other field of activity. Chicago's first two superintendents resigned to engage in business.<sup>81</sup> Anson Smyth resigned in Cleveland because of annual election and the resultant uncertainty of tenure.<sup>82</sup> Ariel Parish, New Haven's longest serving superintendent, retired on account of age, as did Barringer, who served longest in Newark. Holbrook, of Rochester, resigned on two occasions, in both instances to engage in a book agency for publishing houses.<sup>83</sup> Paul resigned in Washington to return to the high school principalship, because he enjoyed that work more than the superintendency.<sup>84</sup> The second leading cause of resignation was acceptance of another superintendency. The majority of the educators coming to the superintendency from outside the local system were superintendents in other cities. Thus Jones resigned in Indianapolis to go to Cleveland; Kendall in New Haven to go to Indianapolis; Gilbert in St. Paul to go to Newark; and McAllister in Milwaukee to go to Philadelphia.

A consideration of dismissals involves, in addition to outright discharges, instances of forced resignations and failures to reelect after charges have been preferred. Thus, in Washington, Zalmon Richards did not secure reappointment after vigorous protests against such action were made by the board of education.<sup>85</sup>

In Savannah one superintendent was asked to resign because of offense against the moral law in connection with teachers<sup>86</sup> and another was exonerated from similar charges but not reelected.<sup>87</sup> In Baltimore McJilton was removed from the superintendency during his first term as superintendent and after many years' service as treasurer

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<sup>81</sup> Chicago, *Daily Journal*, March 18, 1856; Andreas, A. T., *History of Chicago*, Vol. 1, p. 215.

<sup>82</sup> Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, New Series, Vol. 18, p. 345, September, 1867.

<sup>83</sup> Rochester, *Union and Advertiser*, November 5, 1858.

<sup>84</sup> Washington, *Evening Star*, June 19, 1885.

<sup>85</sup> For record of protests, see pp. 165-166.

<sup>86</sup> Savannah, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 26, 1867.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, June 1, 1896; June 20, 1896; June 29, 1896.

of the board of school commissioners. This action was taken to promote "the efficiency of the public school system."<sup>88</sup> Reverend J. D. E. Jones resigned the superintendency in Worcester after charges had been preferred against him and an investigating committee appointed by the school committee.<sup>89</sup> A dismissal occurred in St. Louis<sup>90</sup> when Superintendent Long was removed from office in 1895, under vigorous protest by some members of the board. Charges of incompetency and inefficiency were made but Long had no opportunity to answer them and the people were left in ignorance as to the cause of the dismissal. The *Globe Democrat* felt that, whatever could be said of the merits or demerits of Mr. Long, "it will hardly be denied that the methods adopted for his removal were low and indecent."<sup>91</sup> The *Post Dispatch* likewise regarded the action as "indefensible" and hoped that the "pernicious method of making changes in public school officials adopted in this case will never be repeated."<sup>92</sup> Soldan, in accepting the position of acting superintendent, stated that the consequences of the action extend far beyond the removal of one man, for unless the board gives satisfactory guarantees that the same action will never occur again it will be unable "to get any man of first-rate abilities to take the position." He continued: "No man of experience and ability who has earned a reputation as an educator will accept a position in which he will be subject to peremptory and humiliating dismissal at the caprice of a faction of school directors."<sup>93</sup>

This concludes a discussion of the superintendents of the nineteenth century. While some men may have "occupied" the office rather than "filled it," troubled themselves as little as possible with responsibilities or exertions or cares, and

<sup>88</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, November 26, 1867; December 10, 1867.

<sup>89</sup> Worcester, *Minutes, School Committee*, November 7, 1865; December 5, 1865; February 6, 1866.

<sup>90</sup> St. Louis, *Daily Globe Democrat*, August 15, 1895.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> St. Louis, *Post Dispatch*, August 14, 1895.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, August 15, 1895.



made "the most of the emoluments . . . and the least of its labors,"<sup>94</sup> a great many others, though lacking professional education because it was not offered in any considerable way, were conscientious, able educators. There were instances when the schools were "running themselves," but in a far greater number of cases the superintendent was a professional worker as sincere as any who may be found to-day. As for boards of education, it may be said that, while some were incompetent, self-seeking, or uninterested, a majority of the members of the boards were sincerely doing what they believed to be best for the schools. With these facts in mind concerning the superintendents and the boards with which they worked, attention will be turned to a consideration of the responsibilities of the superintendent as they are inter-related with those of the board of education in the development and control of the many aspects of the public school system.

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<sup>94</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Courier*, October 27, 1875.

## CHAPTER VIII

## THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The superintendent "should have an opinion of his own, . . . be above suspicion of doing or saying anything merely to please individual members of the committee. While he must necessarily be the servant or agent of the school board, he should never be servile or sycophantic in his relation to it."<sup>1</sup> The *Boston Traveler* expressed itself thus when Boston was in search of a superintendent to fill the serious vacancy caused by the resignation of Philbrick. Many members of boards of education, however, were not in agreement with this concept of the relation of the superintendent to the board of education. A view of the working relationship of the superintendent and the board is to be presented in this chapter. In addition to being worthy of treatment because of their own nature these data serve as an introduction to the chapters which follow, since they permeate each one which deals with the relationship of the superintendent and board of education in sharing the various administrative aspects of school systems which are considered. This necessitates some consideration of the organization of boards of education and their relationship to other bodies, for the activity of the superintendent was frequently defined indirectly rather than by the members of the board of education directly .

The superintendent of schools in Nashville, in speaking of the encroachment of the city council upon the domain of the board of education and the same action of the board of education toward the superintendent and teachers, mentioned that the overzealous fail to realize that teaching is a profession and that "experience in it is necessary to the understanding of what school management should be . . . What would be thought of the father who having called a physician for his diseased child should continually interfere in the case, dictating a different treatment or insist-

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in New York, *School Journal and Educational News*, Vol. 8, p. 659, March 4, 1876.

ing upon prescriptions of his own? If common sense condemns such a course in restoring the physical health, how much less ridiculous to attempt to intermeddle with those to whom is intrusted the more exalted and responsible task of ministering to the wants of the intellectual and moral nature, and of keeping it in a healthy state of development?"<sup>2</sup> Despite such protests, almost twenty years later the Nashville board of public works and affairs still appointed the janitors and, while the board of education had authority to purchase chalk, brooms, pens and soap, it could not supply furniture, stoves, or curtains; nor could it make needed repairs, select sites, or construct buildings.<sup>3</sup> At almost the same date in Milwaukee a number of persons complained about the large size of classes and the unsanitary conditions found in the schools. The president of the board of education replied that the board members were, in such matters, only ignored petitioners, as the city council erected buildings and the board of public works kept them in repair.<sup>4</sup>

Buffalo presents another example of divided responsibility. The superintendent regretted that the schools could not be opened in September because necessary repairs had not been made, and explained that an unfortunate division of responsibility existed. The superintendent appointed the teachers; the mayor appointed the janitors, while the superintendent, who was "supposed by most people to be responsible for the care of the schoolhouses," had no authority over janitors "except when asked to recommend an increase of salary"; the city council purchased school sites; the board of public works erected, furnished, and repaired buildings; contracts for all work were made by the board of public works but had to be sanctioned by the common council.<sup>5</sup> There was lack of strength, not only because non-educational boards were participating in the control, but also be-

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<sup>2</sup> Nashville, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 18-19, 1873-1874.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24, 1890-1891.

<sup>4</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 29-30, 1891.

<sup>5</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Education*, pp. 15-16, 1899-1900.

cause of the methods of financing education and the existence of a number of educational boards, the responsibilities of which were not clearly distinguished, et cetera. Consider the difficulties of the superintendent in Buffalo where, as late as 1882, the district system was employed for tax purposes in the erection and furnishing of buildings. The great corporations in the older and wealthier districts escaped taxation in large measure, for there the children were few, while in newly settled and rapidly growing districts, occupied largely by the poorer and laboring classes, children were in abundance and taxes almost unbearable. "Every proposed expansion of school accommodations had to wait until local objections were overcome by the pressure of imperious needs."<sup>6</sup>

Another form of the district system was that employed by Rochester until 1850, where funds for the operation of the schools were appropriated to the districts by the city government on the basis of the average attendance of pupils during the whole or part of the school year. This led to efforts to crowd one school at the expense of another district, and "the evils of an uncomfortably crowded room, short lessons, and indifferent attention of pupils, . . . were winked at in consequence of the certainty that large numbers would draw a correspondingly large amount of money. Some districts were enabled to continue a school during twelve entire months and then have a surplus of several hundred dollars. Other schools for want of means were discontinued at the expiration of seven or eight months."<sup>7</sup>

Pittsburgh is an example of confusion due to the existence of various educational boards. Each of the wards of the city represented a subdistrict with its own board. In addition to the thirty-nine boards of the subdistricts there was a central board. The central board could make two wards one subdistrict or could divide the ward into two districts but no other change in the boundaries of subdistricts could be

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43, 1886-1887.

<sup>7</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 7, 1852.

made. Frequently children traveled to a crowded school two miles from their residences when there was a half-vacant school within a stone's throw in another district.<sup>8</sup> When the city council cut up the city into wards, some subdistricts had no school, and had to purchase ground and erect one, while others had a building much too large or very inconveniently located. Each subdistrict board had its own rules for the government of the teachers and pupils. Each levied a local tax, elected teachers, purchased grounds, erected buildings, provided equipment, employed janitors, and performed all duties necessary for the maintenance of the schools, except paying teachers and providing textbooks and stationery. The central board, which was composed of thirty-nine members, one elected every three years by each subdistrict board, fixed and paid teachers' salaries, furnished textbooks and stationery, had complete control of the high school and the manual training and other auxiliary schools, and submitted to the city council its estimate of expenses, which became a part of the general municipal budget. The superintendent was elected every three years by the subdistrict boards in convention. This was the situation in 1890, when responsibility was to an extent located. Before this time a great deal of difficulty was experienced. In 1878 the superintendent reported that because of a new law it was "an open question as to who shall order the erection of school buildings and who shall pay for them."<sup>9</sup> Three years later he reported that:

"In the absence of specific legislation no two local boards agree as to the powers possessed by subdistrict directors. Ground cannot be purchased, buildings cannot be erected, debt cannot be contracted, except by direction of the court. At one time the appropriation for local school purposes is assessed on the subdistrict, at another time it is assessed on the city at large, and then again the burden is shifted back to the the subdistrict. At the present time there is much difference of opinion among lawyers, school directors, and city officials, as to the basis of taxation, some claiming that the assessments for

<sup>8</sup> Pittsburgh, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 24-25, 1872.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 34, 1878.

local school purposes should be made on the city valuation and others that it should be on the county. Every amendment adds new difficulties to the situation; supplements that are passed to rectify some wrong generally increase rather than diminish the confusion."<sup>10</sup>

It was reported in 1896 that, while the schools varied widely in efficiency, the "power and patronage" was sufficiently divided to discourage any from holding office on either the central or a subdistrict board "whose only object is to profit by holding office."<sup>11</sup> Five years after accepting the superintendency, G. J. Luckey, in 1873, in a circular to principals, inquired whether drawing and gymnastics were taught, how truants were handled, how examinations were conducted for promotion, and whether any additional legislation was necessary to improve the school system.<sup>12</sup>

Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and New York had difficulties arising from similar conditions. Philadelphia had on its local district boards 448 members, many of whom were alleged to be incompetent.<sup>13</sup> More power was vested in a central board, however, than was the case in Pittsburgh. In Brooklyn, in 1894, a "general lack of responsibility" was reported. The *Educational Review*, holding that Brooklyn still retained many characteristics of a village, stated:

"The board of education cannot be held responsible for the deeds of its local committees, for it has become an unwritten law that whatever is done by one local committee should be approved by all other local committees, that is, by the board of education. Neither superintendent nor principals can be held responsible for the work of teachers in whose appointment they have no voice."<sup>14</sup>

In New York, Olin said: "Power is scattered haphazard and responsibility is very hard to fix," and offered as an example the following.

"New schools are established, on the application of a majority of the trustees of the ward, by the board of education; or, if it will not act, by the decision of the state superintendent of public instruction

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<sup>10</sup> Pittsburgh, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 40-41, 1881.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10, 1896.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19, 1873.

<sup>13</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 13, p. 409, April, 1897.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, pp. 308-309, October, 1894.

on certificate of a majority of the inspectors of the district. Alterations and repairs are made by the trustees. For supplies and repairs costing above \$200 the consent of the board of education is required. Teachers are appointed by trustees, and examined by the city superintendent under rules made by the board of education. They are removable by the board of trustees, subject to appeal to the board of education, but their licenses may be revoked by the city superintendent with the concurrence of two inspectors, with the right of appeal to the state superintendent; and the city superintendent must reexamine any teacher on the request of two inspectors of the district or three trustees of the ward."<sup>15</sup>

Systems of this type led to conditions such as those Draper spoke of in addressing parents who were disturbed over the mental or physical health of their children:

"You seek redress. Going to the teacher you see that she is not disposed, or is not allowed, to hold much converse with you. She refers you to the principal. He means rightly but does not view things through your end of the telescope. He resents your imputations and is powerless to give you relief. You might as well go down to the sea and talk to the waves. You go to the superintendent. At times he can help you, and if he can he will; but again, he would have to walk right into the jaws of official death to redress your wrongs. He has met many another on a similar errand. He sympathizes with you. He will treat you with civility, with patience, and with diplomacy. You may rely upon it that he will refrain from telling you all he knows. Your troubles grow and your exasperation waxes yet stronger. You go to the members of the board of education only to find that they, despite your allegations, shuffle out of the responsibility, and are unable or unwilling to afford relief."<sup>16</sup>

That the appointment of a superintendent did not mean the assigning to him of many responsibilities which one familiar with present practices would expect to have been turned over to him will become evident in the chapters which follow. It is enough here to mention simply that the directors continued to divide up the schools among themselves for a type of supervision and administration. In Providence, in 1846, the committee was divided into sub-

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2, June, 1894.

<sup>16</sup> Draper, A., *The Crucial Test of the Public School System*, pp. 4-5.

committees, which attempted to keep themselves informed of the state of discipline and instruction and "used their influence to stimulate the pupils to punctuality, diligence, and good behavior; and, in a few cases which have called for it, they have interposed their authority to assist the teacher in the maintenance of order."<sup>17</sup> It is of significance that the members of the board of education in San Francisco in 1887 kept office hours on various days of the week for the conduct of school business.<sup>18</sup> In Memphis the president of the board of visitors was required to visit the schools once a year and to prepare the annual report which was published. He was *ex officio* a member of every committee and "coördinate *ex officio* superintendent of city schools."<sup>19</sup> It was also the duty of the president in Memphis and Detroit to act as the organ of communication between the board and the city authorities.

Such participation on the part of board of education members is of importance when we recall the fact that boards of education in many instances deteriorated rather than improved in type of members as the cities became larger and education lost some of its missionary appeal. In some instances boards of education became so large and division of responsibility so marked that there was "indulgence in the hope" that others would perform the duties which individuals omitted.<sup>20</sup> The president of the board in Milwaukee stated that, unless some change were effected in the composition of the boards, that

"The time will come when the meetings of the board will be of little more interest or little different character than periodical assemblies for the mutual ratification of the individual wishes of the several commissioners, the exchange of courtesies and discussions only where jealousies may arise will then form the principal features of the school board proceedings, and vital questions touching the great problem of education will then receive but light consideration. The

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<sup>17</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 3, 1846.

<sup>18</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 6, 1887.

<sup>19</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of School Visitors*, July 6, 1868.

<sup>20</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 27-29, 1888.



commissioners will feel—in fact, I feel many of us do now—that their particular mission is to serve the particular school placed under their charge. Urged by the solicitations of teachers to secure special benefits not provided in the rules, the business of the board will too frequently consist of an exchange of licenses denied by the rules, or in defending the rules from the encroachment of such petitions.”<sup>21</sup>

In Detroit, with ward representation on the board of education, every director wanted the new buildings in his respective ward, and on account of lack of harmony, although funds were provided, buildings were not erected and many children were prevented from attending any school while others were taught in basements.<sup>22</sup> In Los Angeles under the ward representation system during the early nineties, “bad practices seemed to come in, and from that date, personal favor, partisan bias, and general dishonesty of practice seemed to dominate the affairs of the board of education. This condition continued until it came to open bribery and blackmail, and then an upheaval.”<sup>23</sup>

In San Francisco the superintendent in 1890 said that men “are often, we may say generally, chosen who know but little about the systems of education or about what is needful in the management of the schools. The present plan has brought about the selection of those who are to have the management of the schools within the pale of politics. Too frequently it is the case that the position is sought after as a means of political preferment—a stepping-stone to other and supposed higher political positions. This often leads to abuse by causing the members of the board to look more to their own future elevation than to those things calculated to elevate the schools to higher planes of usefulness.”<sup>24</sup>

Another group of situations which handicapped the devel-

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 7-8, 1880.

<sup>23</sup> Bettinger, M. C., “Twenty-Five Years in the Schools of Los Angeles.” *Historical Society of Southern California, Publications*, Vol. 8, p. 70.

<sup>24</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 13-14, 1890.

opment of a well-rounded superintendent were the product of the committee system. When the board was unable to handle matters as a whole, when a new subject was to be added, or when any recurring problem was considered, a standing committee appeared. Thus many boards of education had as many as twenty standing committees—committees on school buildings, law, teachers, music, supplies, grievances, physical education, credentials, attendance, scholarships, evening schools, printing, German, penmanship, finance, sanitary affairs, drawing, warming and ventilation, normal school, rules, library, et cetera. The schools of Cincinnati were managed by seventy-four committees at one time, while the Chicago board of education had seventy-nine at an earlier date.<sup>25</sup>

Such a large number of committees led to a "very cumbersome and unwieldy system of administration."<sup>26</sup> Much of the power that belonged to the board was conferred upon these committees, and instead of being deliberative bodies in many instances the committees or "even the chairmen of such committees, seem to be invested with the full power to act. Whilst the law constitutes the superintendent the executive officer of the board, the chairmen, often without consultation of even their colleagues, constitute themselves the executive officers."<sup>27</sup> In Chicago in 1880 the superintendent spoke of a "dozen more committees than there is any necessity for" and a resultant interference "with an intelligent comprehension of the business in hand." Eighteen years later the president of the board recognized the same weakness and urged that the employees of the board be given most of the detail which was being handled by the committees, so that the business would be "transacted more expeditiously."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Philbrick, J. D., *City School Systems in the United States*, p. 17.

<sup>26</sup> Chicago, *Report of the Educational Commission of the City*, p. 24.

<sup>27</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 13-14, 1890.

<sup>28</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 38-39, 1880; p. 17, 1898.

The superintendent of Rochester stated that, in his municipality, school laws were good but their provisions badly administered.

"There are twenty-one school officers, no individual or no committee of whom have authority, but responsibility may be perpetually shirked from one to another, around in a circle, from individual to individual and from committee to committee . . . We have too many governors. We are overwhelmed with authority and yet have little, if any, responsible authority whatever. Boards, as such, are frequently held to an unenviable accountability, but individuals, never. Now school officers are elected annually, those of one section of the city for some specific purpose, those of another section for another purpose, such as that of electing or appointing a superintendent, or a teacher, or in some manner to aid self, or some friend, to a portion of the school fund. Such motives appear insignificant indeed, and yet it need not be told that they operate to the detriment of our schools."<sup>29</sup>

Providence increased the number of its standing committees and, in order to locate responsibility, "gave to each subcommittee quite independent power in the management of all questions specially committed by the rules to such subcommittee."<sup>30</sup> Much good was anticipated from this action, "so long as we have an ideal membership for each subcommittee." At an earlier date the power of the subcommittees was apparent in Providence, when the rule stating that the evening schools should be managed by the evening school committee "in connection with the superintendent" was amended by request of the superintendent, leaving out all reference to him. In explanation the superintendent stated that he had attended but one meeting of the evening school committee since he was in Providence, and that that meeting was the first held after he became superintendent. He stated further: "The committee on evening schools does not wish me to interfere with these schools, nor in any wise take charge of them. This is not because of any strained relation between us. So far as I understand, I am in

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<sup>29</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 9-12, 1858.

<sup>30</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 3-4, 1896-1897.

amicable relations with each member of the committee and in cordial friendship with some of them.”<sup>31</sup> The situation grew out of tradition, the superintendent explained. If other committees had the same feeling about their work, the superintendent certainly had as an important duty the avoidance of trespassing upon committee rights.

In general, in every city the superintendent was required to attend all meetings of the board and in many instances also to attend all meetings of the standing committees. In a number of other instances he was required to attend all committee meetings when requested to do so. At the board meetings and at committee meetings he generally served solely in an advisory capacity and did not have the right to vote. When he was a member of the board, as well as superintendent, he voted, of course, by right of being a member of the board. Thus in New Orleans, Municipality No. 1, when Fabre was superintendent he submitted a considerable number of resolutions<sup>32</sup> and motions because he knew better than anyone else the weaknesses which needed to be remedied. In Washington, by the ordinance which established the office, it was enacted that the superintendent shall preside at all meetings of the board of trustees, in the absence of the mayor, and shall be entitled to vote on all questions coming before the board.”<sup>33</sup> A rather unique provision of a law concerning the superintendent in San Francisco provided that “any vacancy in the office of school director shall be filled by appointment by the superintendent, by and with the consent of the majority of the school directors then in office.”<sup>34</sup> By the same act the superintendent was “declared and constituted *ex officio* a member of the board of education, without the right to vote.” In cities in which the city council or state legislature estab-

<sup>31</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 52-53, 1891.

<sup>32</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 1, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 6, 1848; July 27, 1850.

<sup>33</sup> District of Columbia, *Compilation of Laws Affecting the Public Schools*, p. 5, 1804-1929.

<sup>34</sup> San Francisco, *Laws Relating to the Public Schools*, pp. 126-127. Act approved April 27, 1863, and amended March 12, 1864.

lished the office, the ordinance or act of establishment, or a subsequent ordinance or act, frequently defined the duties of the superintendent in brief, granting to the board of education the right to define the duties of the superintendent as long as such definition of duties in no way conflicted with the provisions of ordinances or acts.

When the superintendency was established by the board of education the latter also defined the duties. In San Francisco the board of education required that the superintendent "render such aid and communicate such information to the various committees as they may require of him; and he shall suggest to the committee on schoolhouses and sites such plans for building, altering, and repairing schoolhouses as he may consider necessary or most economical for the department."<sup>35</sup> Louisville required that the superintendent "render such aid and communicate such information to the various trustees and committees as they may require of him; and shall attend any meeting of a committee when requested to do so by any member thereof."<sup>36</sup> In Cincinnati in 1867 it was provided that the superintendent shall "be entitled to a seat within the bar and shall have the privilege of debate on any questions connected with his department, but shall not have a vote on any question."<sup>37</sup>

In some instances the superintendent was privileged to speak only when requested to do so. The feeling of the Brooklyn board of education in 1873 was expressed on this matter by its action when a motion was introduced stating that "whenever the superintendent may have any recommendations to make to this board, relating to the best interest of our public schools, he shall have the right of the floor to make his own explanation." This motion was referred to the committee on teachers, who<sup>th</sup> offered a substitute motion, which was adopted, providing that the superintendent should make a monthly verbal report to the com-

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<sup>35</sup> San Francisco, *Board of Education, Manual*, pp. 19-21, 1868.

<sup>36</sup> Louisville, *Annual Municipal Report*, pp. 447-448, 1896.

<sup>37</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 197, 1892.

mittee on teachers and "any suggestions in regard to the better working of the schools. If these suggestions are thought desirable by the committee it shall have the liberty to present the same to the board at its monthly meetings."<sup>38</sup> In Chicago, when the board of education was considering a proposal to issue teachers' licenses to some persons who had failed in the examination, one of the members requested the superintendent to explain the facts in connection with this proposal. A backer of the proposal, however, objected to the superintendent's being heard, because the board already knew his opinion. Also the objector did not believe that it was "right to allow an employee of the board to express his antagonism to his employers."<sup>39</sup>

In his farewell address as superintendent in Chicago, Wells said in 1864: "I do not remember an instance in which I recommended a measure for the improvement of the schools that has not received the full and ready support of the board of education and the hearty coöperation of the teachers. When I desired to elaborate a graded course of study for the schools the teachers with one accord gave me their aid in its preparation; the board of education adopted it without a discussion."<sup>40</sup> Superintendent Jones, of Rochester, reported that he had differed with the board members concerning many subjects, but their relations were of the best and the motives in differing were honest.<sup>41</sup> When J. W. Buckley was dropped as superintendent of Brooklyn, after eighteen years of service, the *Daily Eagle* spoke of him as having had "indefatigable industry" in his work of examining classes. It went on to say:

"He was called superintendent and never assigned to a superintendent's legitimate duties. There are members of the board who are ranked as old members who try in vain to remember ever having heard of any suggestion from the superintendent touching public school management. Of the merits of the school books, the construc-

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<sup>38</sup> Brooklyn, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 6, 1873; July 1, 1873.

<sup>39</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 19, p. 311, March, 1900.

<sup>40</sup> Chicago, *Post*, July 7, 1864.

<sup>41</sup> Rochester, *Evening Union*, November 28, 1855.

tion of school buildings, the grading of school studies—on the thousand and one subjects which give rise to differences of opinion among those who take an especial interest in public education—the board never thought of consulting its superintendent, and the superintendent never hazarded his own peace by troubling the board on such matters . . . . It is due him to say that he never gave the slightest offense to a single member of the board in all the years he has been in office and that he never hazarded a difference of opinion with one of them except when laboring under a mistake as to the opinion of that member.”<sup>42</sup>

A few conflicts between boards of education and superintendents will aid in making their relations clear. In 1853 the superintendent of New Orleans reported that certain schools in the city were closed at an earlier hour on a certain day than he had ordered. He then said: “It must be apparent that an order of such a nature should be *general*; and that if it be in the power of an individual member of the board to issue, it is equally so for another member to countermand, an order; hopeless confusion would necessarily ensue.”<sup>43</sup> A committee was appointed to locate the issuer of the orders which led to the closing of the schools.

In Jersey City the superintendent issued an order to the principal of a school, prohibiting him from admitting more pupils, due to the overcrowded conditions. A resolution of the board directed the superintendent “to expunge said order from the visitors’ book.”<sup>44</sup> This action carried with it the impression that the board was censuring the superintendent for issuing such an order, and to correct such impression another resolution<sup>45</sup> was passed, denying any such intention but pointing out that a difference of opinion existed between the majority of the board and the superintendent touching his authority to issue such an order under the ordinance defining his duties.

When J. M. Greenwood went to Kansas City he gave

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<sup>42</sup> Brooklyn, *Daily Eagle*, July 9, 1873.

<sup>43</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 3, 1853.

<sup>44</sup> Jersey City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 8, 1858.

<sup>45</sup> Brooklyn, *Daily Eagle*, July 9, 1873.

early attention to the composition of the school board. To insure the selection of high-class citizens, and to obviate the chance of political influence, he secured a nonpartisan school board and long tenure for the members.<sup>46</sup> Through this action Greenwood made possible his own development as a strong superintendent.

T. J. Barnard went to Seattle in 1890 and took steps to insure his position, but in a different manner from that which Greenwood employed. If charges preferred and testimony submitted before the board of education in 1897 were correct, he was "guilty of pernicious activity in influencing and controlling school elections." He caused political organizations and committees "to be constituted amongst the teachers in said school district, looking to the end of raising money and taking an active part in the election of directors for the years 1893, 1895, 1896 and 1897." The petitioner to the board charged that Barnard had "directly and indirectly urged various teachers in said school district to stand together and see that their friends registered and voted at the election of 1897, . . . that if they so voted they could control the election, and by controlling the election secure the election of school directors which would enable the administration to control the school board; and that by controlling the school board they would be secure in their positions as teachers in said schools."<sup>47</sup> A number of principals testified<sup>48</sup> that they had contributed amounts of as high as one hundred dollars in different years for election purposes. One principal testified that he had attended political caucuses of teachers. A Mr. Hart testified<sup>49</sup> that Barnard came to his office and asked his coöperation in the school election of 1896, and that he had "requested him to see Mr. Teater and arrange with him for the use of his

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<sup>46</sup> Galloway, D., *James Mickleborough Greenwood: An Evaluation of His Services as an Educator and of His Contributions to Educational Thought*, p. 16.

<sup>47</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of School Directors*, December 7, 1897.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, December 16, 1897.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, December 17, 1897.



hacks on election day to be used according to Mr. Teater's best judgment. Hart testified that he made such arrangements and that Barnard paid to Hart for Teater the sum of \$150 or \$175 for services rendered. The proceedings against Barnard were then temporarily suspended, pending a charge that one member of the board was prejudiced against Barnard and had indicated that he would vote for his removal.<sup>50</sup> When Barnard's defenders appeared to have lost this fight, it was moved and carried that "the hearing of evidence in this investigation be now closed,"<sup>51</sup> and no further action was taken. Three more years elapsed before Barnard was dropped, although the board was ready at the end of two years to take such action. Cooper, the superintendent who followed him in office, stated that when he came to Seattle there was "a bitter contest over the control of the schools, dividing both people and teaching force into two factions. Someone expressed the view that feeling ran so strong that the division sometimes extended to households."<sup>52</sup> Several annual elections were necessary to settle the question.

Washington had one of the most interesting conflicts of authority between the superintendent and board of trustees. The ordinance of 1869, which established the superintendency and provided for the appointment of the superintendent by the mayor, with the approval of the councils, authorized the superintendent "to direct all matters pertaining to the government and course of instruction, books, studies, discipline and conduct of the public schools, and the conditions of schoolhouses and of the schools generally."<sup>53</sup> Crosby Noyes commented editorially that this was "rather too sweeping" and, further, that it "serves at one fell swoop to do away with pretty much all the duties heretofore exercised by the board of trustees. A thoughtful consideration

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<sup>50</sup> Seattle, *Post Intelligencer*, p. 8, December 19, 1897.

<sup>51</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of School Directors*, January 5, 1898.

<sup>52</sup> Cooper, F. B., "Twenty-One Years in the Seattle Schools." *Seattle Grade Club Magazine*, p. 14, March, 1923.

<sup>53</sup> District of Columbia, *Compilation of Laws Affecting the Public Schools*, p. 5, 1804-1929.

should be given to this matter before deciding to put aside the experience of so many well-informed men as are now to be found upon the school board."<sup>54</sup> When the ordinance was passed, rumor had it that Zalmon Richards would be appointed; the *Evening Star* considered this appointment "a good one," since it promised that "the experiment of the new office" would be "tried under favorable auspices."<sup>55</sup> Richards, who was an outstanding educator, was appointed superintendent, the duties of the office were defined, and the experiment proceeded. On May, 1870, one member of the board of trustees presented a resolution, charging that Richards has

"acted in defiance of the law creating his office, and has defeated its beneficent intent by openly declaring his independence of the board; by importing from Chicago a set of school registers . . . without even adapting them to the schools of Washington, though he had promised to do so, a promise with which he complied only by placing on the title-page 'Prepared Under the Supervision of Z. Richards, Superintendent of Public Schools'; by introducing into the public schools in violation of the rules by the board sound charts, prepared by himself, the profits from the sale of which accrue to himself, said charts being in conflict with the authorized textbooks; by precipitating a collision of authority by issuing to the teachers a mode of annual examination and promotion which has been unanimously rejected by the Board . . . ; by declaring that it is his intention, in utter disregard of law, to make the promotions, and to do so upon the basis of marks given by himself upon the basis of reading alone, or for reading and spelling in schools, in which, in addition to these branches, arithmetic (both mental and written) and geography are taught, and to disregard all the marks given by the teacher during the whole year for all the studies, thus making the future of a scholar depend upon his opinion, formed from listening to a reading about one minute, regardless of the patient examination in all the studies conducted by the teacher, with the assistance of the trustees, during ten months; by persistently neglecting to comply with the specific instructions of the board to furnish the necessary blanks and forms for the use of the schools; that when in visiting the schools he has consumed the time by talking

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<sup>54</sup> Washington, *Evening Star*, April 24, 1869.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, May 8, 1869.

rather than examining and that, while undertaking to teach the sounds of letters, he has violated all authority and analogy, and by his errors in spelling common words has excited the derision of the pupils; that his written compositions are full of gross and palpable errors in rhetoric and syntax, which betray the most inexcusable ignorance of the common rules of the language; that every refusal of the board to submit to his dictation has been followed by petulant censure of its members and threats of their removal; that his irascibility manifested in the meetings of this board and of the teachers, his impatience of contradiction, his unwillingness to receive and act on suggestions, and his intense egotism, as well as his lack of candor, have destroyed his usefulness and his influence for good."<sup>56</sup>

These charges were referred to a special committee on charges against the superintendent, which stated in its report: "The office of superintendent of public schools is in its nature purely executive. It requires thorough education, practical knowledge of teaching, suavity of manners, great conscientiousness in the discharge of duty, judgment and tact, and those social qualities which enable a man to co-operate with his fellow men in carrying out a common object. He should avoid rather than seek responsibility." The committee reported further that it believed the difficulty arose "solely from the fact that the law creating this office required his appointment by authority other than that of the board, deriving his official existence from the same source as the board. The superintendent has never considered himself an agent, but as an equal in power and authority. When the members of the board defined his duties under the law they did not meet his ideas as to the extent of the authority conferred upon him, and in this respect he has considered himself curtailed in power. The members of the board, on the other hand, could not see how it was possible for them to enlarge his power according to his wishes without destroying to a great degree their own usefulness. Hence resulted a divergence in practice and the inevitable collision . . . . Contributing freely their time and labor for

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<sup>56</sup> Washington, *Abstract of Proceedings, Board of Trustees*, May 10, 1870. *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 177-178, 1870.

their [the schools'] good, the members of the board of trustees, one and all, earnestly hope that no hindrances will be presented to obstruct their progress."<sup>57</sup>

Following such haranguing, the superintendent was not reappointed but the law was left unchanged. The superintendents who followed had no difficulty of such proportions, probably because they lacked the concept Richards had of the place of the superintendent in the administration of a school system. The *Evening Star* criticized the mayor when he was up for reelection, maintaining that he had done nothing in behalf of the schools except "cripple them by creating the needless office of superintendent of schools in order to make a fat place for a favorite, who has been in constant collision with the capable board of trustees, to the great detriment of the school system."<sup>58</sup> The *Ohio Educational Journal* regarded the failure as being due to the lack of coöperation on the part of the members of the board, who "have thrown every possible obstacle in his way, and . . . attempted to thwart his plans by petty and silly legislation" and "stooped to personal discourtesy." It further commented that the charges were read with "a hearty laugh," since "most of the acts complained of are the legitimate duties of the superintendent." Finally it recommended the indicters to its columnist as material for his column on "Fools and Schools."<sup>59</sup>

San Francisco witnessed an interesting conflict when, in 1883, a "head inspector" was appointed whose special duty was to "visit schools and ascertain carefully by frequent oral examinations the condition of the classes; to observe carefully the methods of teaching and discipline pursued by the teachers; to give advice and assistance to teachers and principals when necessary, and in their presence and before their classes exemplify the best methods of teach-

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<sup>57</sup> Washington, *Abstract of Proceedings, Board of Trustees*, May 28, 1870. *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 178-179, 1870.

<sup>58</sup> Washington, *Evening Star*, June 3, 1870.

<sup>59</sup> Ohio, *Educational Monthly*, New Series, Vol. II, p. 242, July, 1870.

ing.”<sup>60</sup> The “head inspector” was placed “under the direction of the committee on classification, and was thus made a kind of quasi-superintendent, possessing a power really greater than the legally elected superintendent on all matters relating to teachers.”<sup>61</sup> This step was probably due to the independence of the superintendent of the board of education. There were doubts about the legality of the office, and an injunction against the payment of the salary of the inspector was asked for in the Superior Court. In accordance with a suggestion of the judge, the “rules of the board were amended so as technically to place the ‘head inspector’ under the general direction of the superintendent. But this was merely nominal, made merely to secure the salary of the head inspector. He continued all the same, the instrument of the committee on classification. It was distinction without difference.”<sup>62</sup> Swett called the office and its procedures un-American, in that it was the instrument used by the committee on classification to demand resignations of teachers under threat of a public investigation. The board claimed the right to appoint these officers (there were two after 1887) under its power to employ teachers. On the other hand there was little question that the duties imposed upon them were those which statute intended should be carried on by the superintendent. That the board of education made a great “educational mistake” in this action cannot be denied, although the members of the board may have served their ends, which were probably ulterior, satisfactorily.

As a final example of conflict, an experience of Maxwell as city superintendent of New York will be cited. In his first report he attacked the local committee system of Brooklyn and stated that, while Brooklyn had progressed educationally, every step of progress was retarded and much

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<sup>60</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 134-135, 1892.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

progress was prevented by this system. Specifically he charged:

"1. The young women who are licensed to teach in the borough of Brooklyn are compelled to visit the places of business and residences of members of the school board to sue for appointment and to bring political and other pressure on the members to secure places. Under this system a young woman who is without friends of influence, no matter what her attainments may be, usually receives an appointment, if at all, only after her inferiors who have 'influence' have been provided for.

"2. The same unseemly and unprofessional devices that are often required to secure appointment are not seldom employed to secure promotion. The result is that many teachers and principals have been promoted to places for which they are ill adapted or wholly unfit, to the great injury of the cause of education in Brooklyn.

"3. The local committee system has driven many of the best men that ever sat on the Brooklyn board to resign or refuse reappointment.

"4. Under the local committee system it is almost impossible to bring about the transfer of principals and teachers from school to school when such transfer is necessary for the good of the system.

"5. The system is deprived of the inestimable advantage of having experts in educational work assign each teacher to that work for which he or she is best qualified."<sup>63</sup>

The president of the school board of the borough of Brooklyn denied "each and every charge" made by the superintendent.<sup>64</sup> The report was referred to the committee on

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<sup>63</sup> New York, *Annual Report, City Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 86-88, 1899.

<sup>64</sup> Under the charter of the city of New York, effective January 1, 1898, provision was made for a "school board of twenty-one members for the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx, a school board of forty-five members for the borough of Brooklyn, . . . and a board of education of nineteen members, for the entire city, composed of the presidents of the four school boards, ten members elected from the membership of the Manhattan and the Bronx, and five from the membership of the Brooklyn, school board." The charter granted to Brooklyn the right to retain its local committee system of appointing, transferring, and promoting teachers and principals. The board of education of the borough of Brooklyn was permitted to continue making appointments without nomination by the borough superintendent, until, by resolution of the borough board, appointment only upon nomination by the superintendent "shall have been adopted." (For further detail see the charter of the city of New York, effective January 1, 1898.)

school system, which "conceded the right of the city superintendent to express his opinions and to offer, in his report, any criticism or recommendation that he deemed to be in the interest of the schools."<sup>65</sup> The committee called the attention of the superintendent, however, to the fact that he made specific charges "affecting the honor and integrity of the members of the school board of the borough of Brooklyn." Superintendent Maxwell replied that he was prepared to stand by his report as presented. The committee thereupon called upon the superintendent to substantiate the charges, producing witnesses if he desired. The superintendent replied that to submit the facts was a part of his sworn duty and that a detailed discussion of his recommendations, unless the board proposed to act upon them, was "neither expedient nor, in my judgment, as a condition precedent to the publication of the report, admissible."<sup>66</sup> For a period of several months it was questionable whether or not the board would approve the report and order its publication. Finally it did so, prefixing to the report a statement by the committee on school system, holding that the superintendent evaded the issue when called upon to substantiate the "scandalous charges" he made. The *Evening Post* commented that the board no longer dared to "persist" in its "policy of suppression" and that the reply which was prefixed served only "to call renewed attention to the strictures which it seeks in vain to refute . . . . They have, as it were, mounted into a high tower, armed with a big bell, ringing it furiously and shouting to the assembled crowd: 'See what the superintendent of schools says of us. He says our schools are full of politics and all sorts of uncleanness and ignorance and barbarism, and we are so afraid that the people are going to believe him that we are going to suppress his report.'"<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> New York, *Annual Report, City Superintendent of Schools*, p. 1, 1899.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> New York, *Evening Post*, December 14, 1899.

That some boards of education did not think of the superintendent as their executive was shown in many instances by their appointing an assistant superintendent, who was responsible directly to the board rather than to the superintendent. The unfortunate conflict of Pickard and Doty in Chicago, which has been related,<sup>68</sup> is an illustration of such a situation. By this it is not meant to infer that the superintendent did not have sufficient duties to occupy his time. The superintendent of Portland, in discussing his "multifarious and oftentimes singularly incongruous duties," made that point clear when he said that the board exacted of its executive officer:

"The ability not only to supervise and direct the legitimate work of a city system of schools, to examine and estimate the work done in every department from the infant class of our eighth grade to the high school, but also to turn his attention to the condition of the sewers and water pipes; to inspect furnaces, and heating apparatus; to repair streets and sidewalks; to prepare plans and details for schoolhouses; to prepare the specifications for and take charge of all the supplies used, and see to their distribution and economical use; to attend all board meetings and keep detailed duplicate accounts of the entire income and expenditures of the department; to prepare 'copy' and read 'proof' of every line of printing done; to conduct all the official correspondence usually appertaining to such an office; in short, the school board of Portland, have, by their rules, regulations and usages—usages with all the force and effect of law—required of the city superintendent such a round of duties, that no one, except a confirmed egotist, or one who knows himself to be endowed with the capacity, talent and tact of a factotum—'a man of all work'—could have reasonably expected an unchallenged administration."<sup>69</sup>

The superintendent of San Francisco was pressed also, although by duties of a different nature, and he spoke of his office as the "omnium-gatherum" of the school department and his duties, "in short," as being to "listen to everybody's complaints; accommodate all; displease none, cater to caprices; combat, yet often succumb to prejudices; defy

<sup>68</sup> *Ante*, p. 135.

<sup>69</sup> Portland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 29-30, 1888.



opposition yet sometimes yield to it; be everywhere; do everything and know everything; or else he is a very negligent, unfaithful, unkind, unjust and shortcoming superintendent."<sup>70</sup>

While the duties of the superintendent were numerous and the calls upon his time multitudinous, too frequently his work was defined or thought of as Philbrick described it when he said that its "aim is to discover, to a greater or less extent, the tone and spirit of the school, the conduct and application of the pupils, the management and methods of the teachers, and the fitness and conditions of the premises."<sup>71</sup> It was not the general rule to act as the New Haven board of education acted and adopt the "policy of giving the superintendent large powers and holding him, after a reasonable time, responsible for results."<sup>72</sup> This generous conferring of powers was partly in recognition of the abilities of Kendall, the superintendent in New Haven.

The relation of the superintendent and the board of education was the relation of a particular superintendent to a particular board. This explains, to a considerable degree, the lack of consistent progress in educational administration which is rather noticeable during the nineteenth century. Frequently a strong superintendent would improve conditions strikingly, only to have a weak superintendent, who followed him in office, permit all or nearly all that had been gained to escape his control. The relationship of the superintendent and board of education is well illustrated by the history of school administration of Cleveland:

"They established the position of superintendent very early . . . and they filled the position successively with strong, even eminent men, and they gave these superintendents large powers. They were men who knew their business and performed it, who knew what belonged to the office and allowed no one to exercise its power over them. The people practically put the appointment of teachers into

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<sup>70</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 63-65, 1867.

<sup>71</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 137-138, 1882.

<sup>72</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 46, 1896.

the hands of these men. The character of the superintendents and the purpose of the people combined were more decisive than written laws. The superintendents did not fool with politics; they were not parties to secret intrigues and machinations; they made it their business to get good teachers and maintain good schools; they had their eyes out for good teachers continually and got the best they could and wherever they could; if there were people of selfish instincts, mere plunder hunters, in the city who did not like this, and there were, they fought such Philistines to a standstill; they relied not upon political dickering for support, but upon the substantial sentiment of the city, and ordinarily they did not rely upon it in vain; when the time would come, as was inevitable, that there were enough disappointed place seekers to combine and overthrow them, through the use, not of one of their own number, but of some other good and respectable name, one above the level of those who used it, the defeated one would march out with his banner flying and in company with his self-respect. Then events would resume their sway again, and once more history would repeat itself. During all these years the integrity of the school system itself was hardly an issue or in doubt; the only questions were whether one set of respectable citizens or another should build and repair schoolhouses, and whether one good man or another should nominate the teachers and superintend the instruction.

"But the time came when the integrity of the system itself was in jeopardy. With the growth of the city; with the increase of place seekers and plunderers; with the multiplication of troublesome classes and the greater influence of patronage upon political organizations and elections; with false diplomacy, lack of aggressiveness, and insufficient confidence in the people on the part of the superintendent's office, the school system of the city came face to face with the question whether its old plan or organization was equal to the preservation of its own life. The city was being sold out on the business side of its school administration and the unprepared and unworthy, who had influence, were swarming into the rapidly increasing teaching force and getting the places of highest trust and emolument in service. The result was the degradation of the force, and paralysis and desolation in the work of the schools . . . .

"And then Cleveland was thoroughly aroused. A new plan of school government was devised, unlike any other in the country . . . a new law was prepared, and supported with such over-whelming

sentiment, that it found easy passage in the Legislature."<sup>73</sup>

Then followed in Cleveland "an unprecedentedly good administration of school affairs."<sup>74</sup> A. S. Draper and L. H. Jones, serving as superintendents, deserve much credit for "reviving" conditions as fine as had ever existed and for achieving beyond the best achievements of the past.

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<sup>73</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 88-90, 1894.

<sup>74</sup> Wilcox, D., *Municipal Government in Michigan and Ohio*, pp. 172-173. Footnote: Personal letter of Judge Blandin.

## CHAPTER IX

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY IN REGARD  
TO TEACHERS

Such common acceptance of the thought "as is the teacher, so is the school" as to lead to its becoming a frequently quoted axiom points to the fact that work with teachers was the most important field of service for the superintendent. This belief, coupled with the difficulty experienced by members of the board of education in handling the teacher problem efficiently, opened the way in many cities to larger possibilities of service for superintendents.

The first aspect of this problem is the superintendent's relation to the preservice training of the teachers. Superintendent Maxwell, of Brooklyn, stated that the damage done to the school system by the "continued recruiting of the teaching force from the ranks of those who have received no professional training or experience" was incalculable, and related that in Brooklyn, "in 1887, 205 new teachers were appointed, of whom only 62 or 26.5 per cent had received any professional training. In 1888, 234 new teachers were appointed, of whom only 62 or 26.5 per cent had received professional training."<sup>1</sup> To overcome this difficulty Maxwell urged the expansion of the training school. Furthermore he made efforts to give its graduates preference, and urged the adoption of a rule which existed in most of the western cities, providing that no one without professional or university training should be appointed to any position in the public schools.<sup>2</sup> It was not until 1884 that the Brooklyn board of education established a training school, in accordance with plans outlined by the superintendent in his annual report to the board in 1882.<sup>3</sup> At an earlier date, 1855, a normal school had been established

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Minneapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 50-51, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, City Superintendent of Schools*, p. 31, 1886.

through the efforts of Superintendent Buckley.<sup>4</sup> In 1851 Greene urged the establishment of a normal school in Providence, to afford "a systematic drill in the art of teaching."<sup>5</sup> The Washington board of trustees, in 1885, asked from its superintendent recommendations concerning a normal school, which had been urged by superintendents for many years.<sup>6</sup> In Newark the establishment of a normal school was referred in 1855 to the committee on the high school and the superintendent.<sup>7</sup> Superintendent Denman, in San Francisco, urged the establishment of a normal school and treated at length a proposed course of study in his annual report of 1875.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in many instances the city training institutions were the result of efforts to secure their establishment by the superintendent.

The superintendent, very frequently in conjunction with the committee on normal schools, also had much influence in determining the organization of the school, courses offered, admission and graduation requirements. In Jersey City the superintendent, the principal of the normal school, and the committee on the normal school held an examination every two months for candidates for admission to the normal school. To be admitted the candidates had to pass satisfactorily an examination in arithmetic, geography, grammar, spelling, and reading.<sup>9</sup> In Newark annually, in June, an examination was held by the superintendent and the committee on the normal school for the graduation of the pupils of the normal school.<sup>10</sup> Superintendents were also responsible for lengthening the course from six months to a year and later to two years.<sup>11</sup> They not only frequently planned the curriculum for the normal school but in many instances

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<sup>4</sup> *The New York Teacher*, Vol. 7, p. 276, March, 1858.

<sup>5</sup> Higginson, T. W., *History of Education in Rhode Island*, p. 195.

<sup>6</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, August 25, 1885.

<sup>7</sup> Newark, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 26, 1855.

<sup>8</sup> Swett, J., *History of the Public School System of California*, p. 74.

<sup>9</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 31, 1870.

<sup>10</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 151, 1878.

<sup>11</sup> For example, see Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 54, 1887; p. 78, 1889; p. 86, 1891.

taught a course or two.<sup>12</sup> Some of the early training schools were purely schools of practice. This was the case in New Haven<sup>13</sup> until 1882, when theoretical instruction was introduced. Very often this practice period was not of definite length, for if a call came for a substitute one of the practice teachers was sent out. Normal schools thus began in some cases very simply by having perhaps four or five girls work in some school with the more experienced teachers. The superintendent exercised a hand in guiding such beginnings into city normal schools. In some cases the practice teachers and the regular teachers were gathered together each Saturday for normal school instruction, the remainder of the week being devoted to teaching.<sup>14</sup> The superintendent also exercised a supervision over the practice teachers and followed their work when they left the practice school.

How thoroughly some cities adopted the training-school idea is well illustrated by New Haven, where by 1880 not more than one teacher a year entered the system as a grade school teacher who had not received her training in the local training school.<sup>15</sup> An interesting case of the establishment of a normal school was found in Indianapolis. The board of trustees voted the superintendent a hundred dollars to visit the Oswego Normal and Training School, and authorized him to establish a training school in Indianapolis, provided that it be organized "without any increase of the expenses of the public schools."<sup>16</sup> Six months later the

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<sup>12</sup> For example, see Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 14, 1885; Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 42, 1889; Savannah, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 12, 1867; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Common Schools*, p. 32, 1868.

<sup>13</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 36-38, 1882.

<sup>14</sup> For example, see Jersey City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March, 1854; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Common Schools*, p. 15, 1866; p. 32, 1868; Wilmington, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 27, 1876-1877; Savannah, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 12, 1867; Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 25, 1874; United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, pp. 395-396, 1873.

<sup>15</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 49, 1880.

<sup>16</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, June 19, 1866.

school was in operation under the direction of a "Normal" teacher from Oswego, whose salary was paid out of the savings made through having twelve practice teachers, six of whom taught in the morning and were taught in the afternoon, while the six under instruction in the morning became teachers in the afternoon, all teaching "for the compensation of being taught and nothing else."<sup>17</sup>

Some cities did not maintain training schools, and those which did rarely received as large a percentage of even their grade school teachers from the local training school as was the case in New Haven.<sup>18</sup> The superintendent therefore had the problem, or shared in the problem, of determining who should be permitted to teach. In some cases little was done in this regard except the provision of a general rule that all employed in the future should have received special instruction in a normal school or have had a year's experience. Much more often, however, with or without such general rules, examinations were administered to applicants for positions. These examinations were usually given by the superintendent, by a board of examiners composed of educators outside the board of education or practically so, or by a standing committee of the board of education. The last plan was the most widely used, the committee being assisted by the superintendent to varying degrees in different cities. The practices of a number of cities will be presented to show various procedures.

In Worcester the committee on teachers, with the superintendent as chairman, examined candidates and decided by a vote which of the candidates should be awarded certificates.<sup>19</sup> The city superintendent, or one of his assistants as he designated, in the presence of at least two inspectors, conducted the examinations in accordance with regulations established by the board of education in New York. In recognition of the fact that some who made high grades

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<sup>7</sup> Indianapolis, *Daily Journal*, March 5, 1867.

<sup>8</sup> *Ante*, p. 177.

<sup>9</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, p. 19, 1883.

in the examination failed utterly in practice, a provisional certificate was issued for six months and became permanent when the city superintendent, by careful examination of the teacher's class, became convinced of her practical ability.<sup>20</sup>

The superintendent in Brooklyn devoted a considerable portion of his time to giving examinations and marking papers. Two examinations were administered each month, each examination lasting for from two to four days from nine a. m. to approximately six p. m.. Due to the burden of holding the examinations, the superintendent would not re-examine those who had proved to be totally incompetent in a previous examination.<sup>21</sup> Later he suggested that examinations should be given only to those who have been promised positions by one of the local committeemen upon condition that they shall have the superintendent's certificate.<sup>22</sup> This work, the "most arduous labor and the weightiest responsibility" of the superintendent, was lightened in 1893, when the superintendent was empowered to employ help to aid in marking the papers.<sup>23</sup>

In Jersey City, around 1870, the practice of examinations by the committee on teachers was transferred to the superintendent, assisted by a number of male principals.<sup>24</sup> The superintendent of Wilmington, in 1880, gave examinations in orthography, definitions, arithmetic, grammar, composition, geography, and American history;<sup>25</sup> and to similar elementary branches in New Haven in 1867 "a few questions were added to draw out the views of candidates relating to the duties of the teacher, methods of teaching and governing a school."<sup>26</sup>

In Baltimore the superintendent administered examinations twice a year, and a special one whenever a member of

<sup>20</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 150-151, 1884.

<sup>21</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, City Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 13-14, 1876.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9, 1881.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182, 1893.

<sup>24</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 135, 1879.

<sup>25</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 19, 1878-1879.

<sup>26</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 41, 1867.



the board proposed that some individual be examined. This was a "kind of invidious discrimination"<sup>27</sup> which increased or decreased depending upon the membership of the board of commissioners.

Another practice which came into vogue at a later date was "suspending the rules of the board and declaring by vote that a certain person's name is placed upon the list of eligibles."<sup>28</sup> This procedure eliminated the necessity of that person's taking an examination. While in a number of cities, such as Memphis<sup>29</sup> and St. Louis,<sup>30</sup> examinations were conducted for principalships or other promotions, this was not the case in Baltimore, where any teacher who had served ten years became eligible for any other position in the primary or grammar schools. This enabled the promotion of many who were totally unfitted for the position into which they were placed.<sup>31</sup> In Rochester, in 1870, the superintendent reported that the schools were suffering from appointments made under his predecessors without examinations.<sup>32</sup>

In Savannah the superintendent prepared the questions, while the committee on examinations submitted the questions to the candidates and marked the papers.<sup>33</sup> The committee on teachers in Atlanta conducted the examinations for a period; then the superintendent aided the committee by preparing the examination questions, and finally he was requested to prepare the questions and administer the examinations.<sup>34</sup> In New Orleans the superintendent, in the presence of the committee on teachers, interrogated the candidates, after which the committee voted, declaring those

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<sup>27</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 33, 1879.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44, 1895.

<sup>29</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Visitors*, February 12, 1872.

<sup>30</sup> St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 43, 1893-1894.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 42, 1870.

<sup>33</sup> Savannah, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1888.

<sup>34</sup> Atlanta, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 178, 1888; *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 24, 1888; April 22, 1892.

qualified who received the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee present.<sup>35</sup> Salt Lake City, Louisville, Omaha, Cleveland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Cincinnati had examination boards, of which the superintendent was generally a member.<sup>36</sup> In some instances members of the board of education were also on the examining board, but in others all members were professional. In Los Angeles for a time the superintendent and four teachers served as the examining board.<sup>37</sup>

These examining boards came to be provided for by state law, in most instances where they were employed, by the end of the century; earlier in the century some of them existed because of a recognition on the part of members of boards of education of their own lack of ability and a dislike of having one man—the superintendent—serve alone. Buffalo established a board of examiners in 1892. Previous to this time the examinations were conducted by the superintendent, who also made the appointments. The change was approved by the superintendent because he believed that examination and appointment in the hands of an elective officer offered a great temptation to the misuse of power.<sup>38</sup> The Philadelphia board of education had a committee of teachers to assist in the examinations before a superintendent was appointed.<sup>39</sup> The superintendent in Chicago reported in 1868 that, on account of the many resignations, he held frequent examinations, which occupied

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<sup>35</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 16, 1846.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Salt Lake City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 107, 1891; Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, June 7, 1852; July 9, 1866; Omaha, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 1, 1872; Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 46, 1876; San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 43, 1870; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Common Schools*, p. 173, 1873; p. 367, 1883.

<sup>37</sup> Bates, E., *A Study of the Development of Elementary Education in Los Angeles City*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>38</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Education*, pp. 15-16, 1892-1893.

<sup>39</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 20-21, 1889.

"twenty-seven full days, or a little more than one eighth of the school days of the year."<sup>40</sup> Philbrick<sup>41</sup> considered Boston conspicuous for its lack of a good system for examining candidates. There examinations in the details of a wide range of subjects, even for headmasterships, prevented many of those best fitted by experience from presenting themselves for examinations for the positions in which they were needed.

The plan of examinations adopted by Washington in 1878 is deserving of further consideration. Under this plan the superintendents of both white and colored schools, with other persons selected by the committee on teachers from the corps of supervising principals and principals, constituted a board of examiners, which was divided into two sections, the first composed of the two superintendents and one examiner, and the second section composed of the remaining examiners. Examinations were required for "teacherships" and for promotions within the system. The first section prepared the questions and conducted a written examination, the answers to which the second section graded. At a subsequent date the first section conducted an oral examination of the candidates. The two sections worked absolutely independently, not being permitted to attend each other's meetings. The written examination was worth 80 and the oral 20 in a total mark of 100 as the highest possible score. The committee on teachers then considered the marks, which were sent to it directly by each section of the board of examiners respectively.<sup>42</sup>

Examinations had developed and, in a few instances, with the beginning of state certification, were beginning to decline, or at least were emphasizing different subjects late in the century. Examinations of the type Swett experienced, shortly after 1852 when he went to San Francisco, when

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<sup>40</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 135-136, 1868.

<sup>41</sup> Philbrick, J. D., *City School Systems in the United States*, pp. 139-142.

<sup>42</sup> Washington, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 8, 1878.

the applicants, arranged "in a row, . . . were questioned 'once round' in arithmetic, 'once round' in geography, 'once round' in spelling by the superintendent and the mayor,"<sup>43</sup> were no longer the practice in large cities. Swett ranked highest in the examination, "but of course somebody else who had 'influence with the board' got the place."<sup>44</sup> This practice lasted longer in some cities than did the particular type of examination to which Swett was subjected.

Consideration must now be given to the very important matter of appointment. The superintendent who is to be held responsible for results, or who is expected to supervise effectively, must have control in this matter, in spite of the fact that "in the whole range of public school work there is nothing to which the average school commissioner, trustee, or member of a board of education takes more kindly than to the appointment of teachers. There is no power of which he is more jealous. There is none with which he would less willingly part."<sup>45</sup>

Annual examinations in some form for the teachers who wished to continue in office were held in Louisville, Buffalo, San Francisco, and Milwaukee. In Louisville, in 1852, it was resolved by the board of trustees, "That we now declare vacant the places of all those teachers who refuse to be re-examined and that we will now proceed to fill the places of those who have refused."<sup>46</sup> The practice of renewing a certificate which was valid for a year, as all were, was unknown in San Francisco from 1853 to 1863 unless by re-examination. "It was the delight of successive boards of education to re-examine all teachers at the end of each year."<sup>47</sup> In Milwaukee the board of commissioners, when considering the possible discontinuance of the annual exami-

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<sup>43</sup> Swett, J., *History of the Public School System of California*, p. 175.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Hendrix, J. C., "The Best Methods of Appointing Public School Teachers," *Educational Review*, Vol. 4, p. 260, March, 1892.

<sup>46</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of School Trustees*, August 16, 1852.

<sup>47</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 122, 1892.

nation of teachers, commented: "This yearly examination of old teachers is considered by some as unnecessary and imposing upon the examining committee a labor that could be well dispensed with. But the examination of the papers submitted by many of the teachers shows that it would be unsafe to dispense with the rule at present."<sup>48</sup> The superintendent in Buffalo, in 1852, administered an examination to all teachers in the school system except those who held county or state certificates, because teachers had to be qualified to draw public money and a certificate, good for only one year from its date, was the only legal evidence of qualification.<sup>49</sup> Superintendent Fosdick, of Buffalo, noticed in 1866 that many of the teachers were not equal to the duties which they had assumed and that many were not in the habit of studying. He determined to hold an examination of all the teachers, "to convince those who were attempting to teach without the requisite qualifications of their ignorance, and those who were qualified but were neglecting to study that it was necessary to continue them in their position."<sup>50</sup>

Admitting that "it is always a very agreeable duty to the local committees to reward, when possible, their meritorious teachers by promotion; and that promotion in its turn is one of the most effective appliances to encourage teachers and arouse them to earnestness and activity in their arduous labors," the trustees and visitors of Cincinnati questioned whether it was desirable to continue, whenever a teacher in any grade except the lowest resigned, advancing "each one below to the grade next higher, leaving the primary department to be filled by the new teacher."<sup>51</sup> A similar practice existed in Wilmington many years later where, with seven primary grades, seven changes occurred when a teacher in the highest grade resigned.<sup>52</sup> The complaints of parents led

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<sup>48</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 15, 1863.

<sup>49</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 23, 1852.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>51</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, p. 32, 1852.

<sup>52</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 19, 1873-1874.

the superintendent to question the continuance of the practice.

Assignment of teachers in many instances was not differentiated from appointment. In a large number of cases the local committee appointed a teacher for a particular grade in a particular school. Some interesting early exceptions occurred. In New Orleans, in 1845, a committee hired the teachers and "the superintendent was instructed to place them in those schools in which he would deem it most expedient."<sup>53</sup> In Jersey City the principal of the school, the local board members, and the superintendent were a committee to assign the teachers to classes.<sup>54</sup> The Nashville board of education elected teachers on a "reserve corps" and the superintendent assigned them to any vacancy which existed. At the beginning of each session, however, an assignment committee worked hard at placing each teacher "in the grade she desires, at the same time in the building nearest her home; to give to each who thinks her experience warrants the conclusion that she is a born general a hall to preside over; to supply each capable of playing 'days absence' with a position as organist in a large hall; to place all those who are averse to primary work in the upper grades; to promote all those who are worn out teaching the same grade for a number of years consecutively; to harmoniously adjust all these clashing interests, and at the same time keep steadily in view the welfare of the children."<sup>55</sup>

A situation in Baltimore shows that assignment was not thought of as distinct from appointment. In 1898 it was resolved that the superintendent should fill all vacancies existing in the primary and grammar schools. This was considered out of order, as being in conflict with the rules.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 1, 1845.

<sup>54</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 167, 1886.

<sup>55</sup> Nashville, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1888-1889.

<sup>56</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, November 14, 1898.

A year later the superintendent made the fact public that, instead of transferring teachers, the local committees which needed teachers employed new ones, while the local committees which did not require so many teachers as formerly continued all whom they had previously employed. The superintendent, in a letter to the president of the board, stated that "there was no necessity for appointing the twenty-three teachers from the list of white female eligibles as there were over this number of white teachers in schools in which the number of pupils did not warrant their retention. Instead of appointing persons from the eligible list to fill these places, teachers in the schools in which there was an excess should have been transferred, as far as required, to the schools needing additional teachers."<sup>57</sup> He also pointed out that twenty-eight unnecessary colored teachers were employed. The president of the board replied that the superintendent should have spoken during the year and not have feared "offending some local committee." The president further stated that at the beginning of the year the board decided that "if possible, no new teachers be appointed, and the members acquiesced so far as to authorize the president, in conjunction with the secretary, superintendent, and assistant superintendent, to transfer teachers from those schools which had a surplus to those where vacancies existed."<sup>58</sup> A special committee, appointed to investigate conditions, reported forty-one teachers in excess of the need.<sup>59</sup> The affair contributed much strength to the later movement toward reorganizing the school system in Baltimore.

Until 1897 the local subcommittees of Boston despite numerous efforts to change the situation, exercised the real power in the appointment of teachers. Then the board of supervisors was given the initiative in the appointment of teachers. An attempt made to abolish the local subcommit-

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, December 27, 1899.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, January 16, 1900.

tees failed and in 1899 they succeeded in regaining their former power in their respective districts by exercising a "practical veto over all appointments, transfers, and removals of teachers." The superintendent regained his authority in 1902, only to lose much of it again in 1904. The year 1906 witnessed the discontinuance of the subcommittees, and the superintendent was given the power, subject to the approval of the school committee, to appoint, transfer, and remove all directors, principals, and teachers.<sup>60</sup>

Concerning the matter of the appointment of teachers a former member of the school committee of Boston wrote, in 1897:

"Actual merit is one of the last things thought of, if it is ever thought of at all. . . . The superintendent and his supervisors are mere figureheads. Even an opinion is rarely asked of them in such matters as this. Transfers are made without their knowledge. . . . The board at one time ordered a preferred list of submasters eligible for promotion to be made by the supervisory body, but the very first time there was a vacancy it was found that the man with a 'pull' was not on the list, and the list was therefore ignored. Subsequently, it was found to have been ignored so much that the board gravely voted it out of existence. 'Pull' and expediency stand for merit now. . . . The advice of the superintendent, if it is given, has no weight. . . . It is not even thought of, I feel sure, when the board proceeds to the business of making the changes."<sup>61</sup>

The central board of education in Philadelphia was able to accomplish little, despite its efforts, because of the "notorious sectional or local boards" which appointed the principals and teachers. The superintendent did not even have control over the licensing of teachers, as licenses were awarded to the graduates of the high school by the local committee and the principal of the school. The *Educational Review* further commented that the members of the local boards were "nominated by the ward politician for purely political reasons, and in many quarters of the city without

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<sup>60</sup> Boston, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 43-44, 1929.

<sup>61</sup> Wetmore, S. A., "Boston School Administration." *Educational Review*, Vol. 14, p. 113, September, 1897.



any regard for the fitness to the office. Election to the local board . . . is to ascend the lowest round in the ward politician's ladder. Further advancement is earned by converting the sacred office of teacher into political spoil. Not only is all proper selection from among applicants prevented by this system; the system is one which discourages applicants of the right kind from coming forward."<sup>62</sup>

Omaha had no local committee system, but the superintendent was not granted great power concerning teachers. Although, in 1872, the superintendent assigned teachers "in his own discretion when not otherwise directed by the board,"<sup>63</sup> in 1889, in announcing an examination of candidates for teachers' positions, the superintendent urged all board members to be present in order to make a personal acquaintance with the candidates, for future guidance in "selecting teachers."<sup>64</sup>

The superintendent in Los Angeles exercised some power by usage and rule of the board in appointing and assigning teachers until the adoption of the ward system in 1889, when each member of the board of education assumed control of the appointments in his ward.

The superintendent in Memphis stated, in 1867, that he had previously been in the habit of telling the applicants that the one who had exhibited the best qualifications would no doubt be appointed, but that he now told them "that first they must pass the examination and then if they were influential with the members of the board, or had friends to intercede for them, they would no doubt be elected."<sup>65</sup> Later, the rule provided that the superintendent was to nominate teachers, but actually members of the board also did so and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes was elected, with or without the superintendent's approval. In 1886 a member of the board nominated a Miss

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<sup>62</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 1, pp. 486-487, May, 1891.

<sup>63</sup> Omaha, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 22, 1872.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, June 24, 1889.

<sup>65</sup> Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, p. 31, 1866-1867.

Wilson as a special teacher. The superintendent stated that she was "utterly incompetent" and that, while she had been teaching in the schools for three or four years, she had failed in every examination.<sup>66</sup> In 1884 a motion was made to refer assignment of teachers to the superintendent with power to act. The board voted two to two, and the president asked for time until the next meeting to decide on the casting of his vote. At the next meeting he said he "would have to vote against the board giving such instructions."<sup>67</sup>

The board of education in San Francisco had control of the appointment of teachers. Annually, from 1850 to 1870, at the end of each year all positions were declared vacant and a "new deal" was made. The superintendent, in pointing out that the directors seem to lose sight of the fact that they are elected to serve the schools and not "to serve their friends—and themselves," mentioned that they were not altogether to blame, since

"the pressure for place and the importuning of friends are almost irresistible. The pleas of poverty, orphanage, religious and social ties, relationship, political services—past or to come—are showered upon the directors. Promises of patronage in business by the friends of the applicant, of undying love, adoration and devotion . . . are made.

"The applicants who understand the business, and they are frequently incompetent in all that goes to make up a good teacher, will set to work systematically to capture the board of education, and if the field of acquaintance is sufficiently large, will generally succeed. The directors will be besieged by the clergymen and deacons of their churches, by letters from the governor and members of Congress, by editors of newspapers and business patrons, by state, central and county committees, by members of the legislature, by presidents, secretaries, and members of ward clubs, by assessors, tax collectors, county clerks, and supervisors, by firemen, policemen, and street contractors, by capitalists, bankers, and judges, and last, but not least the wife will demand, as a reward for the sacrifices she is compelled to make for the public good, by being deprived of the society of her spouse, that Miss — — — be appointed teacher.

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<sup>66</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 31, 1886.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, July 17, 1884.

"Resistance is useless. The directors must yield, the interests of the schools must be neglected, and the children must suffer, to provide a living for some unfortunate and perhaps incompetent person."<sup>68</sup>

A Grand Jury pointed out that "the custom [which] has grown up, of allowing each director to name a proportion of the new teachers, is a vicious one, based on the demoralizing principle that such positions are patronage to be distributed. It is a wonder that there are so many competent teachers in the school department when we consider that influence or favoritism, and not superior merit, has gained so many their places. The present method of appointment is vicious also from the temptation that it offers for the absolute sale of positions—a temptation that, it is feared, is not always resisted."<sup>69</sup> Swett says that the "patronage of appointing teachers had been mathematically divided among the board members, each director in alphabetical order being allowed to appoint a teacher when his turn came around. The worst of such a plan was that the members themselves were not free agents in making appointments, but were compelled to yield to the demand of partisan 'bosses' or political leaders, or ward politicians. . . . At another period . . . there were several political 'school brokers,' who engaged to secure appointments for the sum of \$300 each. The school brokers pocketed the money and secured appointments by political or personal pull."<sup>70</sup>

The Cleveland board of education very early gave the superintendent rather large power in the appointment of teachers. If a principal was needed, a motion was made that the superintendent appoint one, and report his action to the board. The appointment of teachers was a weighty responsibility, for nearly "50 per cent of the female teachers" were new each year. Later the superintendent recommended and the board elected, the superintendent's re-

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<sup>68</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 422-423, 1880.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181, 1892.

<sup>70</sup> Swett, J., *Public Education in California: Its Origin and Development with Personal Reminiscences of Half a Century*, p. 247.

sponsibility ending after he had pointed out the facts of the case as he knew them.<sup>71</sup> Favoritism crept into appointments more and more until the reorganization in 1892, when appointments of teachers became a responsibility of the superintendent. After two years under this system, Draper reported that "improper influence has been completely eliminated from the appointment of teachers. The principles which should guide the appointing power have been publicly declared and invariably observed. Promotions and assignments have been put wholly upon the basis of merit and adaptation; and continuance has been dependent on competency."<sup>72</sup> In 1900 the school director stated that he and the superintendent "were both subjected to the most humiliating proposals. We were cajoled with promised support and threatened loss of position and in some instances with personal violence. Every artifice and stratagem imaginable was employed by designing and unscrupulous people. . . . All efforts of this character, however, were steadily and persistently resisted, were gradually diminished,"<sup>73</sup> and finally all improper influence was eliminated.

When the proposal to lower salaries was before the school committee of Springfield, the superintendent opposed it on the ground that there was not an abundance of good teachers. He stated that, having "traveled over the greater part of New England and occasionally into New York State to find them,"<sup>74</sup> he was in a position to know. By custom the superintendent of Springfield practically handled all appointments after 1865.

In Cincinnati, in 1887, the superintendent was given the power to nominate all teachers, appointments then being made by the board. Previously appointments were made by the local trustees.<sup>75</sup> During the first years of the superintendency in Salt Lake City, personal favoritism and polit-

<sup>71</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 27-29, 1866.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85, 1894.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36, 1900.

<sup>74</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 20-21, 1898.

<sup>75</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 12, 64, 1887.

ical considerations did not dictate appointments, but by 18-97 pressure was growing and the president of the board feared prevalence of the system which existed in San Francisco.<sup>76</sup> Tousley, in Minneapolis, early secured the right of nominating all teachers. In Seattle, while the rules expressly declared that teachers were to be recommended by the superintendent, Superintendent Kennedy reported, in 1890, that "when the matter of reappointing the present corps of teachers came before the board, my opinion was not even asked. . . . They were elected in a lump, by schools!"<sup>77</sup>

In Milwaukee, after years of actual appointment by the commissioners of the wards, through a committee on teachers, a new statute, in 1898, gave the superintendent the nominating power. The president of the board, urging the members to confine their activities to the "Scriptural yea and nay" and the intent of the statute, stated that "a manifest peril would come from desire of individual directors for power and patronage. . . . The whole theory of our statute is that the board acts as a body and that a director acts only by his voice and vote on the floor. It is the antipodes of the old plan where the executive commissioner was, or might be, the king of his ward.

"And just as surely as 'the ox knoweth its master's crib' the teacher who is appointed and held in place by a director feels that he owes his allegiance to him primarily; and a properly working part of the system will depend upon the character of the director and his relation to the superintendent's department; and on the question how this director desires to extend or make felt his power."<sup>78</sup>

The superintendent of Buffalo examined and appointed teachers before 1892, when an examining board was appointed. Previous to that time superintendents complained of the great amount of time necessary to explain to people

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<sup>76</sup> Salt Lake City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 12-13, 1897.

<sup>77</sup> Seattle, *Post Intelligencer*, June 25, 1890.

<sup>78</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of School Commissioners*, pp. 26-28, 1898.

why they were not appointed. One superintendent favored appointments by a committee of the board or else appointing only graduates of the central school.<sup>79</sup> Appointments took little time after the creation of the examining board, for the superintendents felt compelled to appoint applicants in the order in which they were ranked in the eligible list unless a good reason could be given for doing otherwise. St. Louis, in 1897, gave its superintendent the power to nominate teachers. Previously this was done by a committee on teachers, advised by the superintendent. At almost the close of the century the superintendent of New Haven was given large powers in making appointments by a new charter, under which the superintendent appointed, assigned, and reassigned any teachers or principals in the schools at will, reporting at each meeting all actions taken since the previous meeting. His action stood unless rejected by a vote of five members of a board of seven at the meeting at which the report was made.<sup>80</sup>

In Brooklyn, in compliance with the laws of 1859, applicants for positions appeared before the teachers' committee, or the district committee of the school where a vacancy existed, and were referred to the city superintendent for examination. The Newark board of education conferred with the commissioners of the respective wards and obtained their consent to appointments and transfers of teachers in the commissioners' particular school.<sup>81</sup>

Rochester had an interesting practice of making appointments for the calendar year, so that teachers began their labors in January, thus disrupting the work of the schools.<sup>82</sup> How thoughtlessly many things were done is revealed by a resolution passed in New Orleans: "that it is inexpedient to require the pupils in our public schools to devote half of the school hours to the study of any one branch of education

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<sup>79</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 61, 1863.

<sup>80</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 105-106, 1898.

<sup>81</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 43, 1863.

<sup>82</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 27, 1863.

and that the superintendent be directed so to assign the teachers that each branch may have its requisite number of professors and no more."<sup>83</sup>

When teachers had been appointed and assigned, boards of education generally left the work of supervision to the superintendent. This was a very difficult task, not only because of the poor training of many teachers, but perhaps even more so because of the systems of appointment which have been discussed. For instance, if rules existed similar to the rules governing the superintendent in Memphis, they must have made the superintendent's position a difficult one in many cities. In Memphis it was ordained that the superintendent, "having full power to report teachers for misconduct or inefficiency, shall be held responsible for the successful progress of the schools." With authority only to report teachers, the responsibility may have been unenviable.<sup>84</sup> Consider also the difficulties of the superintendent in Seattle when principals desirous of leaving the city and their schools for a period of time obtained permission from the directors, the superintendent knowing nothing of the procedure until he discovered principals on leave of absence.<sup>85</sup>

In the face of problems of these types the work of supervision was handled in various ways. In some cities a special supervisor was employed for each subject, especially new subjects, such as music, art, et cetera. In other cases, one of the assistant superintendents would handle the lower grades and another the upper grades. There was also the development of the supervising principalship. Some superintendents extended large powers to the principals<sup>86</sup> and

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<sup>83</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 16, 1852.

<sup>84</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July 15, 1848.

<sup>85</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, February 21, 1890.

<sup>86</sup> Cincinnati, Boston, Chicago, and Cleveland were leaders in this movement. See Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*,

the same wholesome development followed as came about when boards of education extended similar powers to the superintendent. There were all types of combinations of these plans in the various cities.

In every city studied considerable evidence of the employment of supervisory techniques was found. The most used techniques were classroom observation and teachers' meetings or institutes. These two techniques were found in practically every city from the time of the establishment of the superintendency, and even previously in some of them.

Classroom observation goes back to the time when all the townsmen of a New England town observed the teacher. The type of observation varied from that of superintendent, who was a mere inspector, and "fitted" from one room to another without remaining sufficiently long to accomplish anything, to the superintendent who truly served as a guide and considered the problems of the teacher his problems and her failures his failures. Many superintendents had as many as eight hundred teachers to supervise and consequently their work in supervision had little effect. Although a valuable part of the superintendent's service, classroom observation was also a most difficult and delicate task. There was always the danger, under thorough supervisors, of the teachers' becoming mere operatives. There was the danger of the superintendent's being regarded, not as a friend and advisor, but rather as looking to an "increased effort on the part of the teachers by a liberal application of the whip."<sup>87</sup>

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pp. 11-12, 1868; pp. 71-72, 1870; pp. 32-34, 1893; New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 39, 1877; Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 24, 1871; pp. 7-8, 1892; pp. 66-68, 1893; p. 12, 1894; St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 188, 1871; San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 75, 1870; p. 60, 1876; Providence, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 7-8, 13-15, 1887; p. 148, 1899-1900.

<sup>87</sup> New York, *School Journal and Educational News*, Vol. 6, p. 15, August 15, 1874.



There was the danger that "teachers become drillmasters, giving special attention to such movements as are most pleasing to their general."<sup>88</sup>

Of great importance is the fact that such a large percentage of superintendents were very largely supervisors, devoting practically no time to the determination of the larger policies. Even when the principals became "local superintendents," not having the sole instruction of any division or class but advising and directing the teachers, checking records of the teachers, and testing the progress of the classes, the superintendent remained a supervisor in a more general sense. The teachers very generally welcomed him and expressed a willingness to coöperate. If teachers failed to coöperate in numerous instances the superintendent could only make a report to the board of education, by which it was referred to the local or visiting committee of the school in question. Thus, in New Orleans, the superintendent reported lack of devotion on the part of the teachers and rooms so noisy, disorderly, and with such rough behavior as to cause the parents to withdraw their children. The board recommended the subject with "much earnestness and force to the visiting committee of that school."<sup>89</sup>

The importance attached to mere visitation can be realized by a recall of the frequent insertions in the annual report of the superintendent of the number of visits made to the various schools, accompanied by a brief explanation to the effect that visits varied in length from a few minutes to an hour, depending upon the demands of the situation. In New York State the state superintendent reported that "the schools of the state were visited during the year 1854 by the several town and city superintendents 22,082 times."<sup>90</sup> This was held to be an improvement over the last year, but not up to the average of two visits per annum to each school

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<sup>88</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 108-109, 1870.

<sup>89</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 3, 1844.

<sup>90</sup> New York, *Annual Report, State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, p. 8, January 28, 1856.

which was the minimum enjoined by law. A required number of visits by the superintendent was a practice which was the direct outgrowth of a similar requirement of visiting committees. Such requirements were found particularly in New England, although they existed also in cities in other parts of the country.<sup>91</sup> A more common provision in other sections was that the superintendent should visit each school as often as his other duties would permit.<sup>92</sup> This came to be the general or usual provision before the end of the nineteenth century. Occasionally board members were urged to visit schools, and local committeemen did so frequently in making the appointments of teachers, et cetera, but in most instances there was little account taken and no requirements concerning such visitation after the superintendency was established.<sup>93</sup> An interesting exception occurred in Washington, where each director, as well as the superintendent, was required to report the number of visits

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<sup>91</sup> Provisions concerning number of visits to each school such as: "at least twice a week," Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Councilmen*, July 24, 1837; "once a week," New Orleans, *Municipality No. 2, Minutes, Board of Education*, May 5, 1843; May 31, 1852; "twice in each month," Newark, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 26, 1855; Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 41-43, 1869; "at least once in each month," Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 2, 1855; Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 314-315, 1874-1875; Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of School Visitors*, pp. 39-41, 1875-1876.

<sup>92</sup> For example, see Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 7, 1868; Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 70-71, 1860; New Orleans, *Municipality No. 1, Minutes, Board of Education*, September 25, 1847; Pittsburgh, *Rules and Regulations Adopted by Convention of School Directors*, pp. 41-43, 1868; San Francisco, *Board of Education, Manual*, pp. 19-21, 1868; Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 42-43, 1857; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, pp. 84-85, 1854; Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Aldermen*, July 15, 1848; District of Columbia, *Compilation of Laws Affecting the Public Schools*, p. 6, 1804-1929; Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 37-38, 1884-1885; Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 9-12, 1869; Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix p. 9, 1872.

<sup>93</sup> An exception existed in Massachusetts where, in 1872, the committee on visitation of school committees was still required to visit each school at least once in four weeks. See Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, p. 6, 1872.

made during the year. Some of the trustees made more visits than the superintendent, while others made very few. The range of visits for the year 1875-1876 was from one visit made by Trustee Randolph to 2,340 visits made by Trustee Johnson. During the same period the superintendent made 1,232 visits.<sup>94</sup> For a number of years these data were presented annually.

The superintendent was also an officer of inspection. As a matter of fact, many of the visits recorded were inspectional rather than intended to aid in the type of instruction afforded. Teachers had to be checked occasionally on account of lack of punctuality, for pupils remarked "that they did not think the teachers should be so exact with their pupils when they themselves were frequently late."<sup>95</sup> Corporal punishment was another problem on which the superintendent had to work in order to reduce it as much as possible. Rules were interpreted differently. In New Haven a rule of the board of education provided that "in case of a violent storm the session may be prolonged to one o'clock" and no afternoon session held. The principal of one school had seven single sessions on account of violent storms while another principal had nineteen.<sup>96</sup>

Greenwood, of Kansas City, rated his teachers periodically on a score card which included order, management, discipline, teaching power, voice, energy and vigilance, attention of pupils, recitation, neatness and cleanliness of room, ventilation, and improvement.<sup>97</sup> He always filled out these cards in duplicate, one of which he left with the teacher, so that she was not in doubt in regard to her standing and knew where improvement was most needed, while the other was preserved in the office.

In New Haven, Wilmington, and probably some other cities, the teachers were afforded "the opportunity of

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<sup>94</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, p. 177, 1875-1876.

<sup>95</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 39-40, 1863.

<sup>96</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 43, 1871.

<sup>97</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 18, 1877-1878.

observing each others' methods of instruction and government,"<sup>98</sup> under the guidance of the superintendent. This was found to be a very worth-while procedure in New Haven, especially with the teachers who had been employed in the system for a considerable number of years.<sup>99</sup> Visits were generally made following an observation of a recitation by the superintendent, and consequently under his direction.

Teachers' meetings and institutes were the other commonly used means of supervision. They were established in a number of cities by order of the board, and, before the superintendency was established, were under the direction of the board or some outside educator.<sup>100</sup>

They included meetings of all the teachers of the city, at which rules of the city schools were discussed; general meetings of all the teachers to hear outside lecturers; special grade meetings; and special subject meetings. At times they took the nature of regular course instruction; again they were based on the problems of the teachers or the results of the superintendent's observation. At some of the meetings there was a discussion of the teachers' reading and emphasis was placed upon the use of the teachers' library which had been developed in a number of cities in connection with the superintendent's office, while at other times the teachers participated only to a limited extent. In most cities attendance at the meetings was compulsory and all absentees were reported to the board of education. The meetings were generally held on Saturday or after school, monthly or semimonthly. When the city became large the principals were frequently in charge of such meetings, or the supervisors and the superintendent regularly held meetings with the principals and supervisors. In general the arrangement of the meetings was a duty of the superintendent, required by the rules of the board. An exception or an addition to this was found in Louisville, where the

<sup>98</sup> Wilmington, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 24, 1873.

<sup>99</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 29-30, 1889.

<sup>100</sup> For example, see Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, p. 17, 1865; Andreas, A. T., *History of Chicago*, Vol. 3, p. 150.

trustees of any ward had the power to convene their teachers whenever they considered it desirable, to increase the efficiency of the schools.<sup>101</sup>

In Wilmington subject matter examinations were given to applicants for teaching positions. Those making a high enough mark were given the highest-grade certificate, while others were given certificates of various degrees of proficiency, which provided that the teachers had to give additional study to the subjects and take examinations each year until a sufficiently high grade was made.<sup>102</sup> In the Saturday teachers' sessions they were offered the opportunity to pursue the subjects in which their marks were poorest until they made grades sufficiently high to warrant the highest grade of certificate. This was an interesting recognition of poorly trained teachers and an effort on the part of the superintendent to increase the efficiency of his teaching force. In Newport, Rhode Island, while certificates were not issued, there were different passing marks on an examination which qualified for teaching in different grades of the schools. All candidates took the same examination and the "per cents qualifying as teachers for the Primary, Intermediate, and Grammar grades were respectively 60, 75, and 85."<sup>103</sup> The Primary teacher who made below 85 had to repeat the examination and make 85 or more before she was eligible for appointment in the grammar schools. No experience was necessary for appointment to the grammar grades, but frequently teachers were moved up from the lower grades.

In writing of the very undesirable conditions in San Francisco with regard to appointment the superintendent reported that "the same means which are used to elect teachers are employed to prevent an incompetent teacher from being discharged."<sup>104</sup> The superintendent of Memphis

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<sup>101</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 6, 1868.

<sup>102</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 37, 1872-1873.

<sup>103</sup> Newport, R. I., *Report, School Committee*, pp. 40-41, 1872-1873.

<sup>104</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 422-423, 1880.

stated that when he reported that "such and such school" did not suit him, "electioneering for the poor, worthy teacher is commenced by her friends, both in and out of the board, and again she is put in charge of the fifty youths to lead them through another meaningless and aimless year."<sup>105</sup>

In general it can be said that the superintendent who had considerable power in making appointments had similar power in dismissing incompetents. Thus, in Cleveland, the superintendent was requested to look over the list and name any "whom it may be desirable to remove," and the board adopted his recommendation.<sup>106</sup> Such action could not be expected, however, in a city where appointments were made by the local committee. In most cases it was the duty of the superintendent to report incompetency to the board and the board referred it to the local committee, if such existed, which proceeded as it wished. In Baltimore the superintendent referred neglect of duty and inefficiency to the local committee; if the latter failed to act he was expected to report it to the board of education.<sup>107</sup> He did not report to the central board, however, for his position depended too much upon the support of the local committees. The superintendent of Buffalo reported, in 1870, that he lost no time in dispensing with the services of those who in his judgment were unfit for the positions they held.<sup>108</sup> In New Orleans when the superintendent was instructed to report all incompetent teachers, he stated that his "opinion of the applicants who were appointed in July" without his approval had not changed in the slightest degree as a result of what had transpired since then. After much discussion the board discharged the persons who had been appointed without the

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<sup>105</sup> Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, p. 31, 1866-1867.

<sup>106</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 7, 1859.

<sup>107</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, October 4, 1898.

<sup>108</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Education*, pp. 17-18, 1870.

approval of the superintendent.<sup>109</sup> Gove, in Denver, and Greenwood, in Kansas City, could make recommendations and expect the support of the board.

In the majority of the cases, however, dismissals were not made so easily. In New Haven, in 1893, the superintendent stated that "the most serious matter in connection with maintaining the efficiency of a teaching corps is the extreme difficulty in getting rid of the indifferent and incompetent teachers."<sup>110</sup> The next year the superintendent spoke of the sustaining of his recommendation in this regard by the board as "an innovation."<sup>111</sup> When Superintendent Search, of Holyoke, Massachusetts, failed to nominate several teachers for reappointment, for reasons which would not stand the light of public discussion, many misrepresentations were made of him and he believed in vain "that the people would have good enough sense to rely on the man to whom they had entrusted the care of the school."<sup>112</sup> The superintendent of Brooklyn, who failed to act with firmness in regard to dismissals, lost his position as a consequence. "Aliquis," in urging that the superintendent be given another trial, explained the difficulties of the superintendency in the following manner:

"It is to be admitted that a number of incompetent teachers occupy places for which they are unfit, inasmuch as they lack the zeal, temper, et cetera, which a teacher ought to possess. Had Mr. Geddings gone on as he began and cleared the schools of these, he would have been sustained by an overwhelming majority, but fearing that he could not stem the torrent he tried to turn it into another channel, and hence his error. Those with a due knowledge of their own incompetency now turn against him, and he, finding that the principals complain of their subordinates, is placed in a false position between two fires—the incompetents, more numerous but lacking moral or intellectual force, and the heads of the various departments,

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<sup>109</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 28, 1853.

<sup>110</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 30-31, 1893.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63, 1894.

<sup>112</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 17, pp. 99-101, January, 1899.

strong, in right, who . . . battle against either party or both united.”<sup>113</sup>

Even so estimable an educator as E. E. White, when given large powers as superintendent of Cincinnati, made very few dismissals compared to the number warranted because he felt the risk too great of his being misunderstood and his action questioned. He was “obliged to accept the situation and do the best possible under the circumstances.”<sup>114</sup>

From the facts here presented it must not be inferred that teachers had life tenure. The local committees saw to it that such was not the case. All that has been attempted is to show the difficulties that confronted the superintendent in his efforts to obtain a group of teachers whom he deemed efficient. Too frequently his efforts were rather futile because of the material presented to him to “work upon.”

The securing of substitutes was very generally a duty of the superintendent. In some cities students in the training school were used as substitutes. It was not before the last two decades of the century that substitutes were regularly elected in any cities. Previous to that time students in the higher classes served until some one could be secured. In Detroit each principal secured his own substitutes, and at times six principals attempted to get the same substitute at the same time.<sup>115</sup>

The telephone proved a most valuable instrument in getting substitutes to the schools needed. In New Haven by the time a messenger came from the principal to the superintendent, the superintendent sent a messenger to the training school, and the substitute reached the school, a large part of a half day was frequently gone. With the telephone, however, in “less than five minutes” the substitute was on her way to the school.<sup>116</sup> The installation of telephones was recommended also in Detroit schools in 1895, primarily to improve the “present promiscuous manner by which substitutes are obtained.”

<sup>113</sup> Brooklyn, *Evening Star*, January 22, 1855.

<sup>114</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, June 3, 1889.

<sup>115</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 20, 1895.

<sup>116</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 33, 1878.



The superintendent, when he was in charge of this service, reported at the regular meetings of the board all substitutes he had employed. When substitute teachers were regularly employed, the procedure in general was much like the appointment of teachers, except that it involved more coöperation of the local committees since the substitutes generally served over a larger area than the district of the local committeeman. Cities without sectional boards early came to view substitute service as a place where the superintendent could study teachers and select the most able for regular service when vacancies occurred.

The superintendent of schools in Hudson City, which is now a part of Jersey City, fixed the salaries of the teachers.<sup>117</sup> The mayor and the common council established and kept each school supplied with a "sufficient number of skillful and competent teachers and instructors." Such control over teachers' salaries was not exercised in any other city studied. The superintendent at times was questioned as to whether or not he believed an application for an increase should be granted. His efforts were devoted chiefly, however, to securing the same salary for the same position throughout the city and thus removing favoritism and partiality to districts.<sup>118</sup> After this was achieved, the preparation of more detailed and fairer salary schedules, taking into account years of service, training, position, et cetera, became his chief responsibility. It was also his problem in a great many cases to secure a salary schedule with sufficiently high levels to win the services of the desired type of person.

In conclusion, it may be said that in no aspect of the educational service was the superintendent granted more power than in the training of the teachers in service. In a con-

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<sup>117</sup> Hudson City, New Jersey, *Charter, Laws, Ordinances*, p. 41, 1855-1867. Note: Above provision was contained in charter passed by legislature April 11, 1855, and amended February 29, 1860. Hudson City became a part of Jersey City in 1870.

<sup>118</sup> See, for example, Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 16, 1853.

siderable number of instances the superintendent came dangerously near becoming only a supervisor. The degree to which the superintendent controlled appointment and dismissal varied widely, depending upon the type of board of education and the superintendent in office. Very many members of the board of education who were trying to be liberal and wished to pay due respect to the superintendent probably felt as the president of the Milwaukee board did when he wrote concerning the recommendations of the superintendent: "It cannot be assumed that such recommendations should be conclusive.... The committee entrusted with the selection of teachers . . . is not a mere figure-head. . . . No matter how honorable and energetic that official may be, it cannot be expected that he should follow personally the work of 900 teachers employed in the schools and judge accurately their individual merit."<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of School Commissioners*, pp. 26-27, 1902.

## CHAPTER X

## THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RELATION TO PUPILS

"The characteristic in the plan of organization which was the first to arrest my attention . . . was the extent to which everything was done in the central office. All authority was exercised there; none was delegated. The principals were such only in name. . . . All details, no matter how remote were managed directly from the office. For instance, children were promoted from grade to grade on the direction of the superintendent, and he was besieged by disappointed parents to relieve them from the results of the failure of their children to sustain themselves in the schools. . . . If a child was mischievous or disobedient he was sent down to the office for discipline. As a result the superintendent's office seemed clogged with mere details of small consequence which could be determined in the several buildings more justly and expeditiously and with less annoyance to persons concerned and less friction to the school system."<sup>1</sup>

This excerpt from the report of Superintendent Draper would apply to many cities other than Cleveland during some part of the nineteenth century. The revelations in such a statement suggested the need for examining the relationship of the superintendent to the pupils. The criticism did not apply to all phases of child accounting. One phase to which it did not apply in great measure was the school census.

The superintendent in Buffalo, in 1843, caused the census to be taken and stated that the "surprising accumulation of youth cannot fail to arrest the attention of the council."<sup>2</sup> The same year the board of education in New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, required the superintendent to register alphabetically the names of all children in the public schools or "such as may be hereafter admitted."<sup>3</sup> Age, residence, and name of parents or guardian were also to be recorded. Brooklyn early required the taking of the census twice a year—one time of children between the ages of five and sixteen, to regulate the amount of city taxation; and the

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<sup>1</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 9, 1843.

<sup>3</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 4, 1843.

other time of children between the ages of four and twenty-one, to determine the apportionment of school funds by the state.<sup>4</sup> New York, in 1854, requested the superintendent, if he deemed the taking of the census expedient, "to report a plan by which the same can be accomplished."<sup>5</sup> Memphis, in 1867, authorized the superintendent to "employ a number of teachers to take the scholastic census,"<sup>6</sup> while Kansas City, a few years later, required the superintendent to make the enumeration.<sup>7</sup> In Savannah, in 1866, the superintendent was authorized to use the United States census for 1860 as a basis until an up-to-date school census should be made.<sup>8</sup> The superintendent of St. Louis, in 1870, prepared school population maps, in order that he might inform the board of education of the number of additional seats required for the ensuing year and the localities in which they were needed.<sup>9</sup> Census-taking was repeatedly urged by the superintendent in Baltimore in the decade from 1870 to 1880 to enable intelligent action.<sup>10</sup>

The superintendent was not always in charge of the census. For example, in Jersey City it was taken under the direction of the county superintendent of schools, who did not reside in the city and did nothing by way of adequate supervision; as a result, the census was very unreliable.<sup>11</sup> Census takers were appointed, set to work, and next heard of when they presented their vouchers for payment. In Newark<sup>12</sup> and in Boston<sup>13</sup> the census was taken by the assessors. The assessors in Boston placed the work in the hands of the superintendent, who selected the enumerators and closely supervised the work, sometimes checking on

<sup>4</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 14, 1852.

<sup>5</sup> New York, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 18, 1854.

<sup>6</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, July 1, 1867.

<sup>7</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 4, 1872.

<sup>8</sup> Savannah, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 19, 1866.

<sup>9</sup> St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Directors*, p. 14, 1870.

<sup>10</sup> For example, see Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 18, 1872.

<sup>11</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 21-22, 1890.

<sup>12</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 135, 1874.

<sup>13</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 103-105, 1872.

efficiency by recanvassing a section of the city in person.<sup>14</sup> How little census-taking had been accepted in some cities by the end of the century is illustrated by the situation in Philadelphia, where, when estimates were made of the number of children not in the schools on account of lack of room, the superintendent requested a statement from the principals of the number of applicants they had turned away and found satisfaction in the fact that this number was only a few hundred. As late as 1896, in order to aid the board in carrying out the provisions of the compulsory education act, the principals were requested to submit a statement of the number of children in their schools and, of these, the number who were below eight and over thirteen years of age.<sup>15</sup> Why take a census when not all who applied could be admitted?

Akin to the census problem was that of truancy and compulsory education. These were not regarded as problems in cities such as New Haven<sup>16</sup> (1865), Newark (1861), and Portland (1878), where children were dropped from the roll after an absence of a certain number of days. Portland dropped them from the roll after three days' absence,<sup>17</sup> while Newark permitted twelve.<sup>18</sup> After being dropped, they had to await their turn to be readmitted or, if seats were available, they could be readmitted if the parents pledged coöperation in securing the punctual and regular attendance of the children. Too few accommodations led at times to interesting legal enactments, such as the compulsory education law of New Jersey, which was not "operative in those districts of the state where there were not sufficient accommodations to seat the children compelled to attend school under its provisions." In Jersey City the superintendent

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal of Proceedings, Board of Public Education*, July 14, 1896. See also Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 8, 1892.

<sup>16</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 36, 1865.

<sup>17</sup> Portland, *Minutes, Executive Committee*, October 7, 1878.

<sup>18</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 14, 1861.

held that this provision freed them from all penalties and obligations of the law.<sup>19</sup>

The superintendent of schools in Boston, from the time of the establishment of the office in 1851, was required to make investigation as to the number and condition of the children in the city not receiving the benefits offered by the public schools. From 1852 to 1873 truant officers were responsible, not to the superintendent, but to the mayor and aldermen. They were appointed by the mayor, subject to the approval of the aldermen, and their reports were made to the mayor. Voluntarily, however, the officers submitted a copy of the report to the superintendent and also met with him monthly for consultation.<sup>20</sup> In order to check up on the efficiency of the officers, the superintendent spent a number of days on "perambulatory expeditions," during which most sections of the city were visited and "everyone [of school age] found was stopped and his case inquired into."<sup>21</sup> The superintendent reported finding very few who did not have a good reason for being out of school. In 1873, by act of the legislature, the school committee was given authority to elect as many truant officers as necessary and to supervise their work.

New Haven, in the school year 1870-1871, established a school for insubordinates and truants. Then, in 1871, the "army of boys who found a pleasant excitement during school hours in watching the arrival and departure of trains, of fishing from the wharves and docks, of playing ball in the outskirts of the city, of hanging around stables, of perching on fences near the schoolhouses, found their liberty seriously abridged by inquisitive policemen."<sup>22</sup> For a second offense the superintendent transferred pupils to the truant school, after which they could not enter another school until such transfer was recommended by the teacher in the truant school

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<sup>19</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 101, 1876.

<sup>20</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, p. 229, 1871.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114, 1872.

<sup>22</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 52, 1880.

and approved by the superintendent.<sup>23</sup> Even with this development and three months of compulsory school attendance, the superintendent reported, in 1873, that forty-one out of every hundred children were daily outside the school.<sup>24</sup> Many of the absentees were believed to be in the employ of shop and store owners who paid no attention to the compulsory attendance regulations.<sup>25</sup> An interesting interference with the action of the superintendent occurred in 1887, when some members of the board of education felt that he had sent too many children to the truant school where they were kept too long. The board ordered all boys in one of the schools for confirmed truants and incorrigibles "sent back to the subdistrict to which they respectively belong, until further orders from the board."<sup>26</sup> Since no action was taken concerning the responsibilities of the superintendent, he continued sending the boys, when he deemed it necessary, to other schools of the same type.

The superintendent in Providence, in 1863, asked the teachers to report each case of truancy to him in order that a record might be kept and the aid of parents and friends sought.<sup>27</sup> The school committee, a year later, appealed to the council for an ordinance to check truancy, but without success. Finally, in 1883, the state enacted a truancy law of a type which the city superintendent had advocated for more than twenty-five years. In Springfield the city council acted, in 1866, following several years of urging by the superintendent. In 1869 the superintendent reported the establishment of a continuation school for children who worked in the mills for their own support. The school was established in coöperation with the Indian Orchard Mills Company, which sent thirty children from "their mills into

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127, 1873.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29, 1873.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27, 1887.

<sup>27</sup> Rhode Island, *Report, Commissioner of Education*, Appendix, p. 22, 1863.

school three hours a day and still . . . [paid] them for full time."<sup>28</sup>

New York and Brooklyn both had officers independent of the superintendent to carry out the provisions of the compulsory attendance law. In Brooklyn the superintendent of attendance was responsible only to the committee on attendance. In 1887 the office of superintendent of attendance was abolished and the superintendent of schools was ordered to organize and manage this work.<sup>29</sup> He then had a corps of truancy agents, as had also the superintendent in New York after he was made responsible for this work. Newark had truant officers and policemen engaged in the work but the superintendent still reported a considerable number of children in the streets.<sup>30</sup> The superintendent in San Francisco early had the duty of "reclaiming truants, and hunting up nonattendants," but found it "physically impossible" to perform the duty unassisted without neglecting some other of his numerous duties.<sup>31</sup> In Minneapolis the superintendent supplied blanks for the teachers to notify parents of the absence of their children. The first and second notice was sent by a pupil but the third was served by the teacher personally.<sup>32</sup> In the case of most of the more recently established cities the enforcement of compulsory attendance legislation was early recognized as a matter over which the superintendent should exercise control.

Theoretically, following the taking of the census, one would expect the division of the city into districts or sections and the assignment of the children to a school. Assignment occurred in many cities years before the census was taken. It was frequently determined by district boundaries, which were remnants of the old district system of

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<sup>28</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 22, 1869.

<sup>29</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 63, 1887.

<sup>30</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 29, 1887.

<sup>31</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 15, 1858.

<sup>32</sup> Minneapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 110, 1878.



administration and were in no way related to the school population, although they had been in their early history. The inefficiency which resulted where outworn district lines remained has been considered in the case of Pittsburgh.<sup>33</sup> It is the purpose here to present evidence of the superintendent's participation in dividing the city into districts and assigning children to schools.

In Buffalo the superintendent had as one of his first duties the discovery of the district boundaries as they then existed. He took a map and drew in lines as fast as he could locate them. His study revealed that "a portion of the city was in no district at all, and several lines overlapped each other, making inextricable confusion in boundary lines and questions of jurisdiction."<sup>34</sup> While the law made the "several schools free only to residents of the districts,"<sup>35</sup> it was the custom in Buffalo to allow parents their preferences if they did not interfere materially with the rights of the residents of any district. The schools were all free and the teachers were paid from a general fund so that, except for buildings, it mattered little. To avoid misunderstanding, teachers were required to refuse admission to pupils from foreign districts unless the pupils presented written permission from the superintendent, which was granted only upon the written request of the parents. In Jersey City no boundaries existed, the "pupils being allowed to attend school where they please even at long distances from home."<sup>36</sup>

In Kansas City, in 1869, the superintendent was directed to modify the limits of the subdistricts in order to equalize, as nearly as possible, the distribution of the children among the teachers.<sup>37</sup> In Atlanta, in 1884, when the grades to which the children belonged were full, the superintendent

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<sup>33</sup> *Ante*, p. 152.

<sup>34</sup> Steele, O. G., "History of Buffalo Public Schools." Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 76-79, 1862.

<sup>35</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 6, 1844.

<sup>36</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 89, 1887.

<sup>37</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 26, 1869.

was given power to send the children anywhere in the city.<sup>38</sup> In 1893 the superintendent was permitted to grant tickets to children living in one district to go to school in some other, provided that he reported to the board all transfers and the reasons therefor. In 1896 the president of the board shared this responsibility with the superintendent. The Los Angeles board of education, in 1876, gave to the superintendent the power to "direct which schools the pupils should attend."<sup>39</sup> New Haven children might attend a school out of their district with special permission of the committee on schools, the secretary, or the superintendent.<sup>40</sup> The superintendent of Chicago granted permits to children resident in one district to attend school in another, if there were "good reasons for the change," under rules adopted by the Chicago board of education in 1860.<sup>41</sup> In Cincinnati it was a duty of the superintendent to see "that transfers are made from one section to another when necessary, with the consent of the local trustees."<sup>42</sup> The last phrase was not included in the regulation as originally proposed, but was added before passage of the regulation was secured. The superintendent of schools of Philadelphia, in 1885, reported overcrowded divisions to the committee on grammar, secondary, and primary schools, which could, if it deemed it desirable, authorize the superintendent to make a division of the pupils.<sup>43</sup> Some cities which early dispensed with the district system of school administration gave the superintendent far greater power in the matters of sectioning the city and of assigning pupils than the situations in the cities here considered would seem to indicate. These cities in general represent the retarded, rather than the advanced, developments.

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<sup>38</sup> Atlanta, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 28, 1884.

<sup>39</sup> Los Angeles, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 11, 1876.

<sup>40</sup> New Haven, *Report, School Committee*, p. 26, 1873.

<sup>41</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 70-71, 1860.

<sup>42</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Trustees and Visitors*, April 24, 1850.

<sup>43</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal of Proceedings, Board of Public Education*, p. 103, 1885.

The matter of assignment or transfer of pupils occurred also in connection with the development of the high school in some cities. In Buffalo, in 1843, the superintendent urged that in "a central, airy section of the city there should be established a school for advanced scholars taken from the different sections."<sup>44</sup> As a result of the superintendent's opinion and an advancing public sentiment, the council, in 1845, requested the superintendent to report the expense of such a project and the number attending the district schools who might more profitably attend the "central school," if such should be established. In 1846 Superintendent Steele reported, and the council adopted, resolutions authorizing the superintendent to make necessary arrangements and providing that the superintendent, in connection with the school committee of the council, "appoint an examining committee, to be composed of one person from each ward, whose duty it shall be to select from the several district schools, out of the number of those who have attended at least three months within the year next preceding the time of making the selection, so many as they shall judge to be qualified for admission to the Third Department, giving each district its just proportion of scholars as far as practicable."<sup>45</sup> This stirred to open hostility those who had secretly opposed the formation of this department and claimed that no transfer of scholars could be made from one district to another under the existing powers of the council. Both parties appealed to the state authority and the final decision was that the "city superintendent, acting as trustee, had the power to accomplish such transfer."<sup>46</sup>

Other duties somewhat related to assignment were the collection, or supervision of the collection, of tuition fees from children residing outside the city limits;<sup>47</sup> the grant-

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<sup>44</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 11, 1843.

<sup>45</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, City Council*, January 27, 1846.

<sup>46</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Education*, p. 75, 1873.

<sup>47</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 2, 1859; Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, Appendix, n. p., 1892; Denver, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 8, 1896.

ing, in connection with board members, of free tuition to meritorious but indigent pupils in cities where tuition fees were charged for all students;<sup>48</sup> the supervision of the collection of such fees and the furnishing of free textbooks to indigent children.<sup>49</sup> The latter responsibility applied only to cities which did not supply free textbooks to all. Furnishing free textbooks to indigent children was not an unusual practice, for the question of free textbooks was not a harshly fought issue in many cities until the last decade of the century.

The children having been assigned to a school, the superintendent's next duty was to examine them. Examinations were conducted in order to determine as accurately as possible the actual condition of the instruction given in the schools; to enable comparison of schools; to increase efficiency, particularly in that the "thought of an examination stimulates constant vigilance and untiring effort, on the part of the instructor, and the electric influence, communicated to the scholars, excites enthusiasm and awakens a spirit of emulation"<sup>50</sup> and eliminates interference caused by the demands of parents that their children be promoted;<sup>51</sup> to classify the scholars; to determine promotions and graduation; to secure uniformity, or to make the "schools in all parts of the city equally good and equally satisfactory to parents";<sup>52</sup> to relieve the teacher of embarrassment occasioned by complaints of parents that their children are not promoted rapidly enough; to relieve weak principals, not strong enough to "stand out in every instance against

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<sup>48</sup> Atlanta, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 28, 1876; Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Mayor and Councilmen*, July 24, 1837; Savannah, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 8, 1867; June 13, 1881; St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 63, 1860-1861 and 1861-1862.

<sup>49</sup> Omaha, *Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 16-20, 1883; Indianapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 67-68, 1866; Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 31, 1870; Richmond, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 25, 1877.

<sup>50</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 4, 1867.

<sup>51</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 32, 1855.

<sup>52</sup> New Haven, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 32-33, 1865.

the begging and coaxing, the implied influence and the covert threats, of parents in their endeavors to have their children promoted before they are fitted to be";<sup>53</sup> to determine which phases of work needed to be emphasized in the future; to measure the ability and success of the teacher. The most frequently cited aims were for classification, promotion, graduation, and uniformity. Jersey City, more than any other city, employed examinations by the superintendent as a means of determining teachers' efficiency. The superintendent was required to examine each class semiannually in discipline, method, and particularly in "degree of proficiency in each branch required to be taught." It was further provided that the "records shall be made by figures, 100 being the maximum," and that "whenever any teacher's record as made by the city superintendent shall twice in succession fall below 75 it shall be reported by the superintendent to the board with a recommendation that the . . . [teacher] shall be discharged."<sup>54</sup> A teacher was also to be recommended for discharge if she received two ratings below 75 by the principal and a similar rating by the superintendent on a subsequent reexamination. In actual practice this meant little, because 75 lacked definition.

Practices in a number of cities will be presented to make clear who prepared the examinations and administered them and the types of examinations employed. In Louisville, in 1839, an examination of the public schools was ordered, the whole board being the committee on examination. In 1860 the examinations were under the direction of the trustees of the wards, aided by the principal teachers, while the examinations for transfer were required to be written rather than oral and were prepared by the superintendent and approved by the committee on examination and control. Portland is outstanding in that at no time did the board of education actively interfere in examinations. Rules for

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<sup>53</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 41, 1885.

<sup>54</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 116-117, 1876.

examinations and promotions remained in charge of the executive committee—the principals of all the schools and the superintendent—because the board took no action in these matters.<sup>55</sup> The principals and superintendent prepared the examinations in general and the teachers coöperated in marking papers of children other than their own.<sup>56</sup> In Providence, following several years of examinations, generally oral, by the school committee, the superintendent, during the late fifties, prepared written examinations and marked the papers. Toward the close of the century these duties were so heavy that the superintendent was permitted an examination clerk to assist in this work. The superintendent in Detroit examined students for an advance from the eighth to ninth grade, but otherwise the principals generally conducted the examinations.<sup>57</sup>

When McJilton ceased to be treasurer and became superintendent in Baltimore, on his visits to the schools he examined the students with "questions that were entirely unpremeditated, and of which the pupils could have had no conception until propounded."<sup>58</sup> Nearer the end of the century the superintendent prepared the questions, and the principals conducted the examinations. In New York, in addition to holding regular examinations, which consumed a large part of his time, the superintendent was required to conduct an examination of any school "with the least possible delay,"<sup>59</sup> whenever the local trustees requested him to do so. In Brooklyn, in 1850, the superintendent was in charge of the public oral examinations. Later the examinations were not public or previously announced but were oral; the superintendent would begin with "the lowest class in the primary department, taking the classes in consecutive order, then pass through the grammar department in the same

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<sup>55</sup> Portland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 18, 1882.

<sup>56</sup> Portland, *Minutes, Executive Committee*, May 5, 1879.

<sup>57</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 92, 1880.

<sup>58</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 84, 1867.

<sup>59</sup> New York, *Manual, Board of Education*, pp. 84-86, 1885.

order, and close with the senior class."<sup>60</sup> The results of the examinations were reported to the local committee. The assistant superintendent, after his appointment, devoted all his time to this work, and in the early seventies the superintendent attempted to give to it one hundred and sixty school days. Previous to this time, and until 1884, the superintendent in person examined the candidates for graduation from all schools at the central school building, the teachers marking the papers. After 1884 the superintendent sent questions to the principals, who supervised the marking of the papers, tabulated results, and then transmitted the papers and results to the superintendent for his inspection.<sup>61</sup>

In New Haven, in 1861, each pupil was examined personally twice during the year, and many of them three times. It was reported that by "arranging these examinations so that rooms of the same grade were examined in immediate succession, the superintendent has been able to compare the progress of pupils in each of the schools in the district with others in the same grades and the results of this comparison lead him to say confidently that with such examinations the graded schools of the district can be made of like excellence."<sup>62</sup> Later, when written examinations were given, they were prepared by the superintendent usually only for the higher grades, especially for high school entrance. Examinations by the superintendent for high school entrance were almost the rule during the period from 1860 to 1890 approximately. The superintendent and his four assistants in New York spent a large portion of their time in conducting examinations. Randall reported, in 1859, that the examinations occupied a period of eight months annually and embraced every class in every branch of instruction in every department.<sup>63</sup> One to three hours was

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<sup>60</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 22-23, 1865.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30, 1887.

<sup>62</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 13, 1861.

<sup>63</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 6, 1859.

devoted to each class, depending on the grade of advancement and the number of studies pursued.

In Washington, before the election of a superintendent, each trustee devoted to the oral and written examinations every school day for approximately three weeks while the annual examination period continued.<sup>64</sup> In 1871 and 1872 the trustees continued to conduct the examinations, with the assistance of the superintendent and others, and their entire time was required for nearly a month. In 1876 the local trustees and superintendent were in charge of examinations, and by 1885 the responsibility had been assigned to the superintendent, assisted by supervising principals. A retention by the school committee of the examining responsibility, somewhat similar to that in Washington, occurred in Boston. The committee on examinations continued its work, in most instances aided by the superintendent. Later the superintendent received control of the work.

Until 1862 the pupils in San Francisco were promoted by the principals and teachers on the basis of the records made during the year. Oral examinations conducted at the end of the year were largely for the public. In 1863 promotions were on the basis of written examinations, and in a few years "the main efforts of teachers were directed to cramming for examinations. Pupils were made writing machines."<sup>65</sup> In 1876, at the request of the superintendent and principals, the committee on classification broke down the "cast-iron system," but San Francisco was not yet finished with uniform examinations.<sup>66</sup> In Newark the superintendent conducted oral examinations regularly until 1866. They were dropped in favor of written examinations around this time because only five hours were available for each one hundred and fifty pupils, or two minutes to each pupil, and this was too short a time to hear the student in all sub-

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<sup>64</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, p. 11, 1865.

<sup>65</sup> Swett, J. *History of the Public School System of California*, p. 78.

<sup>66</sup> See, San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 44, 1878.



jects.<sup>67</sup> Later on the superintendent sent out the papers and, after they were returned, assigned them to committees of teachers and principals for grading.<sup>68</sup> An interesting spelling examination, consisting of two parts, was employed in 1891; first, there was the dictation of a paragraph of prose, and, second, the study of a sampling of the examination papers of each student, which enabled a statement as to the number of misspelled words per hundred under ordinary conditions.<sup>69</sup>

The extent to which superintendents at times became involved in the examination work is illustrated by the case of Beals in Omaha, who "in each of the first four years . . . made nine entirely new monthly written examinations, preparing all the questions in all the subjects for all the grades." He carefully examined the standing of all the pupils except the first primaries, and made all the promotions.<sup>70</sup> The superintendent of Cleveland, in 1862, examined at his office more than twelve hundred "candidates for promotion to a higher reader."<sup>71</sup> In the same city Superintendent Smythe, a few years later, stated that few appreciated his labor in connection with examinations. He continued:

"To prepare 500 questions, ranging through all subjects pursued by the highest nine classes, would, under any circumstances, be a task requiring time and carefulness. The professors in our higher seminaries and colleges have usually to give instruction in but few branches; many of them in but one. And should any one professor be required to prepare questions for the examination of classes in a score of different studies he would doubtless deem his work of some difficulty. And when a superintendent of public schools is required to get up questions, not only in the common branches, but also in the higher mathematics, the sciences, the classics, and *belles-lettres*, he

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<sup>67</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 39-40, 1866; pp. 71-72, 1893.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95, 1881; pp. 225-226, 1888.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61, 1891.

<sup>70</sup> Omaha, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 83-85, 1900.

<sup>71</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 21-23, 1862.

must be a better scholar than I can claim to be if he does not find it necessary to bestow much time and great care upon the business."<sup>72</sup>

In Philadelphia, McAllister stated that the "preparation of papers for the examination of one hundred and ten thousand children is in itself a task of no small magnitude; and when to this is added the direction of all the details connected with carrying the examination into operation, and the securing of such returns as will give exact information as to what has been done, it will be seen how large and difficult an undertaking the superintendent has assumed."<sup>73</sup>

In some cities the examination system did not lead to extreme uniformity, but in many it did. In Kansas City, where the board always left "the school work proper entirely in the hands of the principal, teacher, and superintendent,"<sup>74</sup> there was no danger; nor in Denver, where examinations were known to be "unsatisfactory and some times even untruthful"<sup>75</sup> and where the result was not irrevocable, but modified when the combined judgments of teacher, principal, superintendent, and parent indicated that the best interest of the child would thereby be served. Some superintendents also placed large responsibilities upon the principals, and in this way avoided extreme rigidity as a result of the examinations. Many lacked this wisdom but learned, by 1890 or a little previous to that time, that "examination like fire, is a good servant but a bad master," and that "the students work to pass, not to know, and outraged nature takes her revenge. They do pass but they don't know."<sup>76</sup>

Then began the practice of promoting or admitting to high school without an examination those in the upper half of the class, and finally the discontinuance of examinations with the old purposes entirely. At least, the examination

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-33, 1866.

<sup>73</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, pp. 15-16, 1886.

<sup>74</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 60, 1883-1884.

<sup>75</sup> Denver, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 27, 1881.

<sup>76</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 41-42, 1891.

no longer served as the only measure. In general, examinations were turned over to the principals and teachers for employment as they saw fit. With the loss of confidence in, and the repudiation of, examinations as absolute determinants of promotion many superintendents were relieved of a heavy burden and the schools were in a position to move forward. The superintendent retained a general supervision over promotions and was to be appealed to in cases of dissatisfaction over decisions of principals and teachers, but no longer did examinations given by the superintendent serve as the measuring rod. Examinations administered by the superintendent lacked some of the elements of a good measuring instrument and brought with them many evils. Examinations had played an important rôle, however, in securing uniformity, in having untrained teachers drill students thoroughly, in making possible a better system now ready to take their place.

Classifications, promotions, and related problems must also be given consideration, for they were not always dependent upon examinations and various difficulties arose at times. In St. Louis, at a very early date, the superintendent spent a morning at each school each week in order to fill vacancies.<sup>77</sup> The superintendent in Cleveland had considerable difficulty in assigning new students, for it was "seldom found that they were prepared in all branches for admission to any grade" and many had to be assigned daily.<sup>78</sup> Additional difficulty in assigning must have been encountered, because the work done in the several districts "was by no means uniform; . . . it differed not only in quantity but also in quality."<sup>79</sup> Further evidence of this condition at a considerably earlier date is found in a statement by Superintendent Smythe that "a given class in one school was six months or a year in advance of the corresponding class in an adjoining district . . . . Upon inquiring of my

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<sup>77</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 9, 1841.

<sup>78</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 53, 1869.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, 1892.

predecessors and other parties, I was informed that this irregularity has of necessity grown out of the crowded conditions of the rooms occupied by the smaller pupils. Take, for instance, the Mayflower School. The primary rooms were full to overflowing; the secondary and intermediate rooms contained as many pupils as they could well accommodate; but the grammar schools had room for 20 or 30 additional pupils. From each lower department a class was prematurely moved to the next higher; and in this way the several grades lost their nominal significance."<sup>80</sup> As a result of such conditions, in 1868, upon complaint of a number of teachers, the superintendent examined the pupils in one of the high schools to determine their fitness for the work they were pursuing and then reduced one half of them to the highest grade of the grammar school.<sup>81</sup>

Cleveland was not alone in experiencing difficulties of this type. In New Haven in 1880, on account of many withdrawals of pupils to engage in employment, promotions were made to fill the vacancies, which "disturbed the equality of classification."<sup>82</sup> Some years later, when the high school building was too small, the board raised the passing mark from 60 per cent to 75 per cent and went back to the practice, which was recognized as undesirable, of admitting students only upon their passing an examination.<sup>83</sup> A situation in New Orleans illustrates how buildings set the standards, when the superintendent was instructed "to proceed at once to make a classification of the Franklin School, commencing with the highest department and filling it with scholars most advanced in the school to the number of 48 or 50, thus with the next below and so on down to the lowest division of the school, so that no room will be overfull while there are vacant seats in the other rooms."<sup>84</sup> Uniformity could not

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12, 1865.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53, 1868.

<sup>82</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1880.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8, 1895.

<sup>84</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 7, 1846.

be expected under such conditions, nor when, as in Philadelphia, "each section, and to some extent . . . every school, had its own standard. Each principal made his or her own papers, and the examinations were directed by committees of the local boards."<sup>85</sup>

The task of the superintendent in overcoming such conditions was not always an easy one because of certain factors. In Louisville, in 1858, the superintendent reported that "the trustees of the several wards in which your superintendent held examinations and made transfers have, without any authority from this board, remanded the transfers."<sup>86</sup> In Boston, after being in charge of the primary schools for several years, Philbrick reported that "grading . . . has made some progress during the last quarter. Most of these schools which are favorably situated for grading are now conducted on that plan, though the schools in one building which had been graded have resorted to the old plan. The reasons which induced the committee to take this step were doubtless satisfactory to themselves. To my mind the arguments in favor of the graded system are conclusive."<sup>87</sup>

Milwaukee offers an outstanding example of opposition by a principal. In 1868 the board changed the plan of classification and established the grade system. During the school year 1868-1869 the superintendent examined the pupils throughout the city and promoted those whom he deemed qualified. While he was received cordially in most schools the coöperation was not universal. The principal of the Sixth Ward School solemnly protested against "promoting pupils in his school from one grade to another"<sup>88</sup> by order of the superintendent. Desirous of maintaining harmony, the superintendent had a special meeting of the

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<sup>85</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 18-19, 1889.

<sup>86</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 1, 1858.

<sup>87</sup> Boston, *Seventh Quarterly Report of Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 4-6, 1859.

<sup>88</sup> Milwaukee, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 17, 1869.

board called in order that the duties of the superintendent and principals might be more clearly defined. At the meeting the principal spoke in vindication of the course he pursued, claiming sole jurisdiction in the matter of promotions. A member of the board then explained that the law of 1865 mentioned the superintendent's responsibility for the "careful and proper grading" of the schools and that uniformity could not be secured in any other way. He then offered a resolution "that this board considers it clearly both the right and duty of the superintendent of schools of the city to superintend, direct, or conduct the grading of the several schools of the city, and any action of any principal of any school denying, or in any manner interfering with, this right and duty on the part of the superintendent is unjustifiable and unwarrantable."<sup>89</sup> When a motion was made to adopt this resolution, objection was raised and a vote resulted in 8 nays and 8 yeas. The president thereupon cast an affirmative vote, deciding the issue. A move for reconsideration was lost. However, the vote was close enough to lead to the appointing of a special committee to confer with the city attorney and secure his opinion on the "jurisdiction of the superintendent in promoting pupils from one grade to another."<sup>90</sup> The city attorney mentioned that, in his opinion, under the old system "scholars were examined for promotion and were advanced from one class or department to another by the principal" and that this was claimed to be desirable because principals "necessarily have a greater personal knowledge of the qualifications of their pupils than the superintendent could have." He noted that uniformity was the chief argument for grading and promotion by the superintendent. Turning to the question as one of "strict right," he stated that the purpose of the act of 1865 was to secure a competent superintendent to render service such as that under consideration and that if any rules existed in conflict with the right of the superin-

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

tendent to grade the schools "in person," they were inoperative.

Problems, related to those of grading and promotion, in regard to which the superintendents served in an advisory capacity include the matter of recess, punctuality of students, half-day sessions, marking systems, and semiannual promotions. In Seattle, when the superintendent ordered that no pupil should be considered punctual in his attendance who arrived after the beginning of the school day, and that no pupil should be marked present who merely answered to the roll call and absented himself for the remainder of the day, the teachers presented a petition to the board disapproving of this order.<sup>91</sup> The board recognized the authority of the superintendent to issue it but did not consider the provision in regard to tardiness "for the best interests of the schools" and decided against it, providing that the pupil who asked permission should not be considered tardy if he did not miss one quarter of the session.<sup>92</sup>

When promotions were no longer made solely on the basis of examinations it was the duty of the superintendent to supervise the system employed. The teachers in Baltimore did the promoting, all promotions being probationary, and it was the duty of the superintendent to inquire into the progress of those promoted and "to animate the teacher to turn back any scholar who may not come up fairly to the requirements of the class."<sup>93</sup> Plans of promotion which were adopted were frequently formulations of the superintendent. Semiannual promotions received considerable attention and were employed in many cities by the end of the century. However, no less a power than Greenwood in Kansas City, as late as 1893, was still fighting for them. Yearly promotions were favored by some because they enabled the preparation of uniform questions for each

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<sup>91</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, April 12, 1889.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 68, 1894.

class. In an attack upon those opposing a change in the promotion system, Greenwood stated that "convenience of teachers, principals, and superintendents is a vicious thing to put up against the interests of the pupils."<sup>94</sup>

There was also the problem of caring for those of weak intellect, for without the provision of special classes some children inevitably would remain in a class three or four years, "to the annoyance of the teacher and the detriment of the grade."<sup>95</sup> Another related problem was that of marking and issuing report cards to parents. Little discussion of this problem appears, probably on account of the fact that few changes were made. The usual system, as employed in New Haven, was described thus: "The daily recitations were marked by the teachers; once a month computations of these results were made and a tabulated statement of each scholar's attainment expressed in figures was sent home to parent to be examined, signed, and returned to the teacher."<sup>96</sup> At a later date there were other systems, such as the Newark plan of marking "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory,"<sup>97</sup> and the requirement in New Haven that if a student was failing the teacher was expected to ask for a personal interview with the parent or inform him by letter as clearly as possible of the condition and causes.<sup>98</sup>

Particularly in some cities in the East there was the question whether or not the sexes should be mixed. There was also the problem of determining upon the general plan of organization. Superintendents were asked for reports on the desirability of a high school, and in some cities high schools were established only after several years of urging by the superintendent that such a move be made. Oftentimes the general organization grew without much planning. As a result, Savannah, for example, had a system in which

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<sup>94</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 63-64, 1892-1893.

<sup>95</sup> Atlanta, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 23, 1897.

<sup>96</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 44-45, 1885.

<sup>97</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 45, 1898.

<sup>98</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 44-45, 1885.



fifteen years were required for a child to pass through the schools regularly.<sup>99</sup>

Class size was another problem which confronted the superintendent. The superintendent of Chicago in 1859, in pointing out that in the ten largest cities of the United States the average number receiving instruction from each teacher in the grammar and primary departments was less than fifty-five, and that Chicago had set as a desirable standard sixty pupils per teacher, stated that the "primary schools still present examples in which a single teacher is made responsible for the sole instruction of more than 150 children."<sup>100</sup> Progress was difficult in some such situations because of the belief that the youngest pupils could be taught by the "least efficient teachers and that a teacher can instruct a much larger number of young pupils than older and more advanced ones."<sup>101</sup> Congested conditions such as these led to the establishment of half-day sessions—one group of pupils attending in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Kansas City and Washington took this step in 1874, while New Haven followed in 1880.

Another of the superintendent's responsibilities was dealing with cases of discipline. Suspensions and disciplinary problems during the early years of the superintendency were handled in a few cities by a committee of the board.<sup>102</sup> In most instances, however, this was one of the early responsibilities of the superintendent, and often amounted to very little. In Jersey City, in 1880, while all suspensions had to be reported to the superintendent, less than a score of cases came to his attention during the year.<sup>103</sup> In Milwaukee, in 1867, on the other hand, the superintendent reported that he had had to make decisions in the case of nearly five hundred suspensions. Of these, except suspensions for absence,

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<sup>99</sup> Savannah, *Report, Board of Education*, p. 21, 1875.

<sup>100</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1859.

<sup>101</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 56-57, 1882.

<sup>102</sup> Rochester, *Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 71, 1863.

<sup>103</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 99, 1890.

which totaled 350, restoration was made only after conference with parents.<sup>104</sup> The superintendent also had the responsibility of assisting teachers with his advice and authority in many cases confronting them. Teachers suspended pupils for absence six half days in any four consecutive weeks; for bad conduct, truancy, defacing furniture, snowballing, and absence from examinations. In general, complaints against teachers were brought to the superintendent, and, if desired, an appeal could then be taken to the committee on discipline and finally to the board.<sup>105</sup> A wise and judicious superintendent, therefore, saved the committee and the board from much annoyance. In New Haven, as late as 1871, the superintendent notified the parents in the case of a misdemeanor and referred the case to a committee of the board.<sup>106</sup> The superintendent in Chicago investigated all complaints of principals, suspending pupils when upon investigation he found it warranted.<sup>107</sup> Most boards of education retained control over final expulsion. In Nashville, in 1857, complaint against a teacher and the superintendent was taken to the council, which appointed a committee to meet the board of education and examine the case. After a hearing, the council sustained the teacher and the superintendent in their course, and the superintendent advised that to adjust wrongs and avoid notoriety complaints should first be brought to him, and then, if satisfaction was not obtained, should be taken to the board of education.<sup>108</sup>

The superintendent, in his relation to discipline also had the problem of regulating the methods of punishment employed. In 1859, in Louisville, a motion which was offered, but failed to be adopted by the board of trustees, requested the superintendent to report the name of each pupil who had

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<sup>104</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 57-58, 1867.

<sup>105</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 229, 1880.

<sup>106</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, p. 27, 1871.

<sup>107</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 16, 1865.

<sup>108</sup> Nashville, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 18, 1857.

left the high school since the commencement of the session and the cause of his leaving. He was also asked to "report if a place of punishment has been established in said school, called a dungeon, and, if so, by whom it was established and how long it has existed in the high school."<sup>109</sup> A substitute motion which required the committee on high schools to inquire into the mode of discipline in the high school was adopted. Generally the efforts of the superintendent were directed at the elimination of, or reduction in the amount of corporal punishment. This was not the case in Lafayette (later a part of New Orleans), where the superintendent was called in, administered punishment with a rod, and was sustained by the board of administrators.<sup>110</sup> The more usual situation was more similar to that in Municipality No. 2 of New Orleans, where each teacher had to make a detailed report to the superintendent of every case of corporal punishment which occurred.<sup>111</sup> In New Haven<sup>112</sup> and Baltimore<sup>113</sup> reports of all cases of corporal punishment had to be made. Progress could then be determined by calculating the decreased percentage of corporal punishment as compared with previous years. This procedure led to a decided improvement in disciplinary measures used and gave the teachers an opportunity to introduce the more reasonable methods, whereas immediate prohibiting of corporal punishment would have wrested the control of the school from the teacher and overburdened the superintendent and committee with disciplinary problems. At a later date the discontinuance of corporal punishment became feasible.

A final relationship of the superintendent to the pupils was in regard to their health. In New Haven<sup>114</sup> and Wash-

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<sup>109</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, May 2, 1859.

<sup>110</sup> Lafayette, Louisiana, *Minutes, Board of Administrators of Public Schools*, June 11, 1847.

<sup>111</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 6, 1848.

<sup>112</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 29, 1869.

<sup>113</sup> Baltimore, *Rules and Regulations of Public Schools*, p. 26, 1881.

<sup>114</sup> New Haven, *Minutes, Board of Education*, May 20, 1881.

ington<sup>115</sup> the superintendent was directed, in 1881 and 1882, to coöperate with the board of health in securing the vaccination of all the pupils. Those who had not been vaccinated were given such treatment in the schools.

More widespread was the study of nearsightedness. The superintendent of New Haven, in 1878, reported that Buffalo, Hartford, Cincinnati, and Brooklyn had their school children examined for this defect and found it very prevalent. Upon learning of this, the superintendent of New Haven carefully examined the pupils in the different grades and found about the same per cent of nearsightedness as was found in other cities.<sup>116</sup> In New York City College nearly fifty per cent were listed as being nearsighted. Superintendent Parish, of New Haven, after studying the problem, pointed out that there was no remedy, and that prevention through proper regulation of light was the object of effort. In the same year the superintendent of Newark observed a similar condition in the schools under his supervision.<sup>117</sup> In 1883 the superintendent and a member of the school committee of Springfield conducted examinations to ascertain the similarity of their children to those of other cities in regard to nearsightedness.<sup>118</sup> Near the close of the century tests were conducted in New Haven for eyesight and hearing. These tests were conducted by the teachers on a well-defined and uniform plan.<sup>119</sup>

New Haven, in 1879, established a "special class" in the high school for those who were in too poor health to undertake full school work. The members of this class could spend one or two hours a day in school and take one or two studies.<sup>120</sup> To be admitted to this class the students had to furnish a certificate from a physician. This class came to be quite prominent and was so highly patronized, or rather

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<sup>115</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 2, 1882.

<sup>116</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 38-39, 1878.

<sup>117</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 66, 1878.

<sup>118</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 13, 1883.

<sup>119</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 61-62, 1899.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46, 1879.

abused, that, upon the recommendation of the superintendent it was abolished in 1883.<sup>121</sup>

In Springfield, some years later, the cry was heard that the students were being overworked. The superintendent studied the situation and reported that, upon the recommendation of a physician, children were allowed to attend school only a portion of the day; that the course of study was arranged so that the more "difficult studies, like arithmetic and geography," came during the autumn and winter months, and the "easier studies, and such as the children are generally more fond of, during the warm weather in spring and early summer"; that the more difficult studies came in the forenoon and the less difficult ones in the afternoon; and, finally, that examinations as tests of promotion below the high school had been abolished and children spared the nervousness which used to accompany them.<sup>122</sup> Such developments as these, and perhaps the introduction of school lunches,<sup>123</sup> near the close of the century, and plans for a more complete medical inspection<sup>124</sup> of all the children at as late a date, constitute the development of the health service in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 85, 1883.

<sup>122</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 29, 1898.

<sup>123</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 89, 1899.

<sup>124</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 11, 1898-1899.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Dr. E. E. White has been credited with the statement that "the first and most important duty in the administration of a system of graded schools is the arrangement of a true and properly graded course of instruction and training."<sup>1</sup> Due to the fact that a system of graded schools demanded some course of study arrangement, it was in this regard that many superintendents encountered their first significant relation to the program of studies. In Kansas City, in 1869, Superintendent Phillips "found the schools unorganized, ungraded, and each school independent of the others. There was an entire absence of anything like a common unity in the work . . . . A course of study such as had the sanction of the best educators of our country was adopted, embracing seven years for the ward schools and four years for the high school department."<sup>2</sup> In Chicago, in 1861, the board of education adopted a graded course of instruction prepared by Superintendent Wells, the beginning of the thoroughly graded system of schools in Chicago which served as a model for many other cities.<sup>3</sup> In Worcester it was a duty of the superintendent to secure "uniformity of instruction of schools in the same grade." This the superintendent found to be impossible without an outline. Accordingly each school was visited, notes were taken of its progress, and each teacher was requested to make a "written statement of the advancement of his school and what part of it was accomplished in one year."<sup>4</sup> From this material a subcommittee prepared a curriculum for all the grades.

The superintendent of Rochester, in 1855, reported that, as a result of a new organization of the schools which had been worked out by the committee on school organization,

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<sup>1</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 113, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 28, 1877-1878..

<sup>3</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 12, 1867.

<sup>4</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, p. 38, 1869.

"a course of study should be adopted to be uniform in all, commencing with the alphabet in the primary departments and ending with the higher branches taught in the senior schools. The want of such a course of study is a great drawback upon the success of our schools. Teachers having no positive guide are apt to give undue latitude to the caprice of pupils; and parents are often poorly qualified to judge what studies should be first pursued."<sup>5</sup> He stated further that he had prepared such a course of study which he hoped would meet the views of the board. This was adopted, but upon the establishment of the new organization, and especially on account of the fact that the high school was drawing students from all parts of the city, further grade divisions and further systemization in the intermediate and primary schools were required.<sup>6</sup> The superintendent, in urging the adoption of a course of study devised to fit the needs of the pupils, stated that "classes should be so graded that each assistant and each principal in those grades should respectively instruct in the same branches during equal periods of time. No pupil should be allowed, under any pretext, to advance from one grade to another without first having mastered the course required in the grade below."<sup>7</sup> The superintendent resigned shortly after making these recommendations, but the principals of several schools took upon themselves the responsibility of reorganizing and classifying their schools upon the plan, and it was found to work so well that after one term the board ordered its general adoption.<sup>8</sup>

In Buffalo, in 1866, the superintendent prepared and urged the adoption of a graded course of instruction and, to his surprise, it was adopted with but slight change. As it was "a great innovation of what had been the policy of the department, it was hardly expected that it would at

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<sup>5</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 15-16, 1855.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

once receive a favorable consideration from either the school committee or the teachers."<sup>9</sup> A reorganization of the schools of Cleveland in 1868 and 1869 revealed the fact that "the work done in the several districts, of which there were at that time eleven, was by no means uniform; that it differed not only in quantity but also in quality; that there were various standards of promotion and that each principal directed and controlled the work of his building largely according to his own notion."<sup>10</sup> Even though there was a prescribed course of study for all the grades and textbooks were practically uniform, when, in 1868, the superintendent offered uniform examinations they were only partially successful, for "principals and teachers could use only such portions as they had taken! That is, the course of study had received so little attention that at the end of the year it was impossible to submit a uniform examination."<sup>11</sup> While this last reference deals with the matter of enforcement rather than with the securing of a uniform course of study, it shows the difficulty of employing a uniform course.

Other cities where special efforts were made to secure uniformity through preparation of courses of study were: New Haven, where, in 1861, the board ordered the superintendent to prepare a course which the average student could complete at the age of thirteen,<sup>12</sup> and where, ten years later, a course of study was adopted "to secure uniformity of progress in the studies with all pupils of the same grade,"<sup>13</sup> thus enabling the ready classification of students passing from one grade to another; Richmond, in 1871<sup>14</sup>; Omaha, where, in 1878, the original course was changed to one that was defined minutely by the limits of textbooks in order to secure uniformity of lessons<sup>15</sup>; Brooklyn, in

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<sup>9</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 44, 1867.

<sup>10</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 13, 1892.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 12, 1861.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46, 1871.

<sup>14</sup> Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 21, 1871.

<sup>15</sup> Omaha, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 43, 1878.



1856<sup>16</sup>; New York, in 1858<sup>17</sup>; Washington, in 1870<sup>18</sup>; Newark, in 1856<sup>19</sup>; Wilmington, where, after attempts to secure uniformity, the superintendent concluded that there are "so many cases in which the classes could not be made to correspond with the grades as to satisfy me that to insist upon any close connection between grades and periods of time works much more harm than good"<sup>20</sup>; and Los Angeles, where the superintendent, in 1881, reported as the one defect in need of remedying, the lack of a course of study for the primary and grammar schools.<sup>21</sup> Los Angeles had previously followed the state course of study.<sup>22</sup>

When courses of study were once adopted by the boards in almost every city, one of the responsibilities of the superintendent was to see that their provisions were enforced. In many instances he was required to report to the local committee, to a committee of the board, or to the board, if he discovered violations, while later, in some cities, he was given considerable authority in securing conformance to the accepted course of study. In New York, in 1869, for example, the superintendent and each of his assistants had, at each visitation, to inquire especially whether the provisions relating to the course of study had been "strictly followed" and without delay report any violations to the board.<sup>23</sup> In Pennsylvania, state law required that superintendents in their visits note the course, methods of instruction, and branches taught.<sup>24</sup> In Chicago, in 1860, the superintendent was required during his visits to "pay par-

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<sup>16</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 12-13, 1856.

<sup>17</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 6, 1858.

<sup>18</sup> Washington, *Abstract of Proceedings, Board of Trustees*, October 20, 1869; October 11, 1870; in *Annual Report*, p. 171, p. 183, 1870.

<sup>19</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 10, 1856.

<sup>20</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Public Schools*, p. 12, 1876-1877.

<sup>21</sup> Los Angeles, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1881.

<sup>22</sup> Bates, E., *A Study of the Development of Elementary Education in Los Angeles City*, p. 33.

<sup>23</sup> Boese, T., *Public Education in the City of New York*, p. 141.

<sup>24</sup> Pennsylvania, *Common School Journal*, Vol. 29, p. 187, October, 1880.

ticular attention to . . . the apportionment among the classes of the prescribed studies."<sup>25</sup>

Interesting early examples of the superintendent's lack of power in regard to the courses of study and methods were found in Buffalo and Cincinnati. When the teachers of Buffalo desired knowledge of the monitorial plan of instruction, the council voted seventy-five dollars to defray the expense of an agent to go to New York and, if necessary, to New Haven, to study the system and procure all necessary information. The superintendent was not designated as the agent to make the study.<sup>26</sup> In Cincinnati, in 1851, A. J. Rickoff, then a principal of one of the district schools and later an outstanding superintendent, communicated with the board, asking whether he should discontinue verbatim recitations in history and geography and use, in their stead, the question system; he stated that there was a misunderstanding between him and the superintendent as to the wishes of the board. Resolutions were offered that the superintendent be instructed that "no change in the studies or mode of study in the schools should be made or directed by him without the order of the board—except as to the mode of study in the three lower grades."<sup>27</sup> The motion was lost, however, and the board seemed unable to agree on the matter. Of especial significance is the fact that matters of this type were conceived of as belonging to lay rather than professional administrators.

Of more interest than the matter of enforcement was the determination of the course of study through the years and the problems confronting the superintendent, the board of education, the committee of the board, or several of these jointly. In New York, in 1858, Superintendent Randall believed that in many classes there were too many subjects (there were eight to twelve), the greater part of them con-

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<sup>25</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 70-71, 1860.

<sup>26</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, City Council*, April 16, 1839.

<sup>27</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 9, 1851.

stituting a portion of each day's instruction.<sup>28</sup> Ten years later, when a committee of the board considered the revision of the course of study for several months, calling "for the counsel and experience of the entire corps of teachers of every grade, of the superintendent of schools, and of all the citizens who take an interest in bringing these institutions to the highest state of practical efficiency, . . . the rooms of the board were thronged with many successive meetings."<sup>29</sup> In 1879 the committee on courses of study and textbooks made a "strenuous effort to modify the somewhat technical system of instruction in English grammar."<sup>30</sup> Their recommendations were not adopted by the board. The superintendent in Baltimore, the year the office was established, was requested to examine the courses of studies and report changes needed. In 1873 the superintendent reduced the amount of arithmetic offered in the schools, and desired to do likewise with algebra, but could not do so on account of the admission requirements of the city college.<sup>31</sup> In 1879 the superintendent complained that there were too many studies, and a few years later he revised the entire program with the idea of "making the work more practical without impairing its disciplinary character."<sup>32</sup> His desire was to teach "a little well rather than much superficially." The superintendent of Brooklyn, in 1882 reported that the number of branches which the students in the higher grades were required to pursue is "much too large."<sup>33</sup> For three years following this report the committee on studies, the superintendent and his associates, and the principals worked to revise the course of study.

Through committees of teachers and principals a new course of study was prepared in 1887 in New Haven, and

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<sup>28</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 6, 1858.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47, 1868.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44, 1879.

<sup>31</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 14, 1873.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53, 1883.

<sup>33</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 24-25, 1882.

the superintendent urged, "By all means let it be followed in *spirit* rather than according to the *letter*."<sup>34</sup> A curriculum problem was encountered a few years later when it was proposed to introduce the study of foreign language, elementary science, and algebra and geometry in the grammar school. To the superintendent it was evident that if such additions were made "there must be corresponding subtractions."<sup>35</sup> He believed that departmentalization would aid in the solution of the problem. In 1896, in expressing the aims of the school as teaching pupils to read, write, and spell, he mentioned also that students must be taught "incidentally, but persistently, respect for truth, obedience, punctuality, order, neatness, industry, tenacity of purpose, regard for the rights of others, self-denial, kindness, temperance, politeness, good manners, pure speech and . . . to be of most service to others."<sup>36</sup> In Newark, in 1859, the city superintendent recommended changes in the manual of instruction, whereupon a committee of four was appointed to make the revision. The following year the superintendent again called attention to the "too great multiplicity of studies and the overtaking of the mental powers of the pupils beyond their healthful endurance."<sup>37</sup> In 1893 the course of studies was revised by a committee of the principals appointed by the committee on textbooks, course of study, and examinations.<sup>38</sup> The teachers of Jersey City requested a revision of the course of studies in 1885 and, with their aid and reference to the course of study of many other cities, it was carried out.<sup>39</sup> A few years later the president of the board, in speaking of changes, expressed the opinion that "this matter of change . . . can be left safely in the hands of the superintendent."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 55, 1887.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37, 1892.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30, 1896.

<sup>37</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 33, 1859.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48, 1893.

<sup>39</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 36, 1885.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14, 1889.

The superintendent of Wilmington, in an effort to make the grammar instruction more practical, asked each of the teachers to make a list of faulty sentences heard among her pupils. He then prepared a list of seventy-five sentences, illustrative of the most common errors, sent a copy of it to each teacher, and asked that the pupils be kept on their guard against such errors.<sup>41</sup> In Philadelphia the superintendent revised the course of instruction to "diminish the pressure upon both pupils and teachers; and . . . to give a larger opportunity for the fuller and freer development of the intelligence of the pupils in all their school work."<sup>42</sup> A year later the president of the board expressed the superintendent's purpose in such revision as being "to break up the mechanical routine into which the teachers had fallen."<sup>43</sup> In 1862, when there was a question in Cleveland as to the time to be devoted to reading and arithmetic, the superintendent was authorized to use his discretion in the matter.<sup>44</sup> This attitude was different from that found in Chicago years later, when it was proposed to discontinue clay-modeling studies. The superintendent favored their continuance, whereupon the member of the board who was especially active in urging their discontinuance said, "In view of the law and with the unmistakable voice of the people, as evidenced in the public press and by petitions and letters sent to me, I care no more for the opinions of the superintendent in opposition than for the idle whistling of the wind."<sup>45</sup>

An interesting working of a committee was shown in Boston, where the superintendent urged a revision of the course of studies in the grammar schools and the school committee promptly referred the matter to the committee

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<sup>41</sup> Wilmington, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 35-36, 1895-1896.

<sup>42</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal of Proceedings, Board of Public Education*, pp. 109-110, 1883.

<sup>43</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, p. 7, 1884.

<sup>44</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, January 12, 1862.

<sup>45</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 5, pp. 306-307, March, 1893.

on textbooks, which requested the superintendent to prepare a desirable program.<sup>46</sup> The principals of Portland requested the board of directors to revise the curriculum, and the board appointed a committee of principals to do the work.<sup>47</sup> In New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, the superintendent regarded the course of instruction as "injurious." There was a lack of judicious selection of studies, "want of a strictly progressive system," and lack of "proportion and proper sequence." He further stated that, "even in our intermediate school, studies are pursued which properly belong to the university. Ancient geography, ancient history, and mythology should be studied in connection with the Greek and Roman classics, but with us they are introduced into the most elementary classes, taking precedence of . . . the fundamental principles of arithmetic and grammar."<sup>48</sup>

Such conditions were not found generally, however, for the free interchange of school reports early made it unnecessary "to grope as the blind without guides,"<sup>49</sup> and there was rather general agreement upon the subjects taught and upon their order. While there was this general agreement, however, the materials examined provide convincing evidence that the question, "What shall the public school teach?" was engaging the attention of schoolmen continuously. As the superintendent of Minneapolis said, "To devise a course of study for a school population as large as ours, and to arrange it so that no matter when the pupil comes into it, or how long he remains, he shall get the greatest possible good, is one of the unsolved problems of our time."<sup>50</sup>

The attempt to solve the problem led to constant experi-

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<sup>46</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, p. 117, 1868.

<sup>47</sup> Portland, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, May 20, 1875.

<sup>48</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 6, 1852.

<sup>49</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 21, 1878-1879.

<sup>50</sup> Minneapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 22, 1878.

mentation. The superintendent of Savannah, in 1881, priding himself on the conservatism of the city schools, attacked the idea of teaching nothing that is not practical and utilitarian and expressed the hope that "this mania for change . . . has in some measure ceased, and the tendency is now to hold the old régime, unless by abandoning it something is evidently to be gained."<sup>51</sup>

A type of experimentation deserving mention is the introduction of new subjects. Physical education was recommended by Philbrick in Boston and, in 1860, a special committee considered the matter and reported in favor of not less than fifteen, nor more than thirty, minutes of gymnastic exercises in all schools every day.<sup>52</sup> Instruction of this type was followed shortly by the introduction of military drill and physical culture. Springfield had gymnastics and other occasional exercises in 1866.<sup>53</sup> In New Haven, in 1886, a feature of the training school for teachers was a half-year course in physical training consisting of many exercises practicable in the schoolroom.<sup>54</sup> In 1896, Philadelphia was considering various systems, with the thought of introducing one or another of them.<sup>55</sup> Closely related was the introduction of hygiene, emphasizing especially the influence of intoxicating liquors, in a number of cities during the eighties and nineties.<sup>56</sup>

Frequently these new subjects were inaugurated as an experiment in a few schools, or in certain grades only. Boston introduced sewing in the early seventies,<sup>57</sup> followed

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<sup>51</sup> Savannah, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 15-16, 1881.

<sup>52</sup> Boston, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 74, 1929.

<sup>53</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 13, 1866.

<sup>54</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 38, 1886.

<sup>55</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal of Proceedings, Board of Public Education*, June 9, 1896.

<sup>56</sup> For example, see *Ibid.*, May 12, 1885; Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 92-93, 1883.

<sup>57</sup> Philbrick, J. D., *City School Systems in the United States*, p. 93.

by Springfield,<sup>58</sup> New Haven,<sup>59</sup> Philadelphia,<sup>60</sup> and Washington,<sup>61</sup> in the eighties. New Haven had sewing in some schools in the early sixties, but this branch was not supported out of public funds for nearly a quarter of a century after its introduction.<sup>62</sup> Probably on account of the extra equipment needed, cooking was not introduced so rapidly. It was added to the curriculum in New Haven in 1888,<sup>63</sup> and after a year's trial the superintendent studied the desirability of its continuance through a questionnaire sent to the parents of girls who received instruction in it. The mothers indicated that the children were interested in it and that nine out of ten showed a new interest in household duties. Nine mothers favored its continuance to every one not in favor of it.<sup>64</sup>

Industrial arts and manual training, which had been included as a part of the kindergarten training, were urged for all the schools, and introduced in a number of cities during the eighties.<sup>65</sup> In some instances they were regarded somewhat as subjects of lesser importance, but in other cities, by 1890,<sup>66</sup> elaborate and well-equipped buildings had been erected. In that year Philadelphia, Boston, Providence, Brooklyn, Springfield, Denver, Omaha, and Minneapolis had made definite progress in this work, extending it in most

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<sup>58</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 14, 1884.

<sup>59</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 64-65, 1884; p. 50, 1887; pp. 39-40, 1889.

<sup>60</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Public Education*, p. 17, 1885.

<sup>61</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, December 13, 1887.

<sup>62</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 39-40, 1889.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38, 1888.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55, 1889.

<sup>65</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, p. 478, 1880; District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, January 13, 1885; New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 39-40, 1883.

<sup>66</sup> For example, Denver, Omaha, Toledo, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. See account in New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 39, 1890.



instances through the high school as well as into the grades.<sup>67</sup>

Other subjects introduced widely into the course of study during the last three decades of the century were music, drawing, elementary science, and commercial subjects. Subjects not newly introduced but emphasized a great deal were reading, with the introduction of much supplementary reading material, and penmanship, a subject which the superintendent was frequently ordered to improve and make certain that the time set by the board of education was devoted to it. Vertical writing was introduced in a number of cities in the nineties in an effort to improve the situation.<sup>68</sup> The experience of the superintendent of Rochester in introducing drawing is interesting. He related that it was introduced "with some slight objection from some members of the board and with decided opposition on the part of the patrons in some of the districts." Further, he was "compelled almost literally to fight his way against the hostility of parents and the indifference and neglect of many of the teachers."<sup>69</sup> By the end of a year some schools had not yet made it a general exercise.

These new subjects often involved special problems for the superintendent, for they led to the appointment of "superintendents" of music, "superintendents" of penmanship, et cetera, who in some instances were rather independent of the superintendent. In Chicago, for example, the board of education appointed a committee for each new subject when it was added, and music, drawing, German, and physical culture consequently did not come under the

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<sup>67</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 39, 1890. Contains brief summary of situation in various cities, prepared by superintendent of schools in urging the establishment of a manual training department in the New Haven high school.

<sup>68</sup> Philadelphia, *Journal of Proceedings, Board of Public Education*, p. 225, 1894; Minneapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 78, 1896.

<sup>69</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 67, 1872.

control and direction of the superintendent, as the remainder of the course of instruction did.<sup>70</sup>

As a result of the introduction of new subjects and consequent curriculum revision came new types of schools or new organizations of the old. In this connection high schools deserve mention. The situation in New Orleans illustrates the work the superintendent had at times in connection with organizing the high school. In 1842 a committee was appointed to confer with the superintendent and to inquire of him as to the expediency of organizing a high school for boys and girls.<sup>71</sup> After requesting him to collect all the information he could command on the subject and to report early the next year,<sup>72</sup> the committee reported, in 1843, that it deemed it highly important to organize a high school in order "to complete the system of public instruction adopted" in the municipality. They referred to the communication of the superintendent in support of this decision and closed their report with a resolution "that the superintendent be instructed to prepare in detail a plan for the establishment of a high school to embrace — years, and that each year be particularly defined with regard to the course of study and the books to be used."<sup>73</sup> The Central School of Buffalo was largely the result of the superintendent's efforts, as has been related,<sup>74</sup> and not until 1858 did he secure the introduction of the classics into the course of study.<sup>75</sup> In Brooklyn, in 1850, the superintendent was requested to investigate whether "instruction in the higher branches of useful knowledge can be given to such of the scholars as may desire and be qualified to receive it." He reported that the sphere of public or common school operations was un-

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<sup>70</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 18-20, 1885.

<sup>71</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, November 9, 1842.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, December 3, 1842.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, February 4, 1843.

<sup>74</sup> *Ante*, p. 214.

<sup>75</sup> *The New York Teacher*, Vol. 7, p. 477, July, 1858.

limited and undefined.<sup>76</sup> Many instances could be given where the superintendent proposed new measures for the high schools after their establishment. There were some cities, of course, where he had nothing to do with their establishment, since they existed before the superintendency. In some of these, such as Philadelphia, he had very little to do with the high school throughout the century.

The high school principal was at times a "bigger man" than the superintendent and consequently the superintendent had nothing to do with the high school course of study. This was to be expected in some of the instances in which the superintendent had formerly been a member of the board of education and in cases of superintendents who completely lacked training and experience in the educational profession. In Newport, Rhode Island, a superintendent, after faithful service, was promoted to the headmastership of the high school.<sup>77</sup> There the headmaster attended the school committee meetings before the establishment of the superintendency and for many years after its establishment. In 1890 the superintendent alleged that he felt his authority as superintendent impaired by the continuance of the practice of having the headmaster sit with the board, and complained "that many of the statistics of rank and attendance of scholars and details of the financial receipts and expenditures are not preserved in his office, or, indeed ever reach there, but are only accessible in the high school building. This he does while disclaiming any desire to control the course of study pursued at the school."<sup>78</sup> The

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<sup>76</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, Appendix, p. 25, 1853.

<sup>77</sup> F. W. Tilton became headmaster of the Rogers High School of Newport after a number of years of successful work in the superintendency. See, Newport, *Annual Report, School Committee*, Appendix, p. 11, 1875-1876. During the academic year 1875-1876 salaries were as follows: superintendent of schools, \$2000; headmaster of the Rogers High School, \$3500; submaster of the Rogers High School, \$2200. See Newport, *Annual Report, School Committee*, p. 26, 1875-1876.

<sup>78</sup> Newport, Rhode Island, *Annual Report, School Committee*, pp. 15-16, 1889-1890.

committee to whom the matter was referred reported that the practice of having the principal attend the board meeting, far from being objectionable, "has shown that it would be well to have the principals of all our schools present to give information and answer questions relative to their several schools; but as this is not practicable in all cases it has seemed fitting and appropriate to the board to continue our unbroken custom to have the principal of our most important school with us." They then offered a resolution that "while the headmaster of the Rogers High School is present at the meetings of the school board, and is directly responsible for the course of study pursued at said school and for the carrying out of the same, and while he makes a separate annual report to the school committee, . . . he shall report directly to the superintendent of schools all the financial and statistical details of the high school."<sup>79</sup> This resolution, with an addition directing the superintendent to exercise the "same supervision over it [Rogers High School] as is given to the other public schools," was then unanimously adopted, as were complimentary resolutions to the superintendent and principal. Many instances may be cited of the superintendent's serving as a member of the high school committee and participating largely in the determination of the curricula offered. Situations similar to the one in Newport probably existed only in cities in the East, and even in that section they were the exception rather than the rule.

German-English schools constitute another new type. Baltimore established them in 1874, after city council submitted to the board of school commissioners a resolution asking that consideration be given to the propriety of introducing the study of the German language into the schools.<sup>80</sup> They were a separate system of elementary schools, proposed by a special committee and the superintendent, in

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 18-19, 1874.

which instruction was offered half the time in English and half in German. These schools attained much popularity in a very few years.<sup>81</sup> By 1878, however, the superintendent was questioning their desirability, since their result was "sometimes an intermediate dialect, a new linguistic development which is neither English nor German."<sup>82</sup> Cincinnati and St. Louis also introduced German instruction successfully into the common schools, according to a committee report in Kansas City where a similar introduction was urged.<sup>83</sup>

Other types of schools which deserve mention are kindergartens, which spread rapidly in the large cities, St. Louis, Boston, and San Francisco being the leaders in the movement; summer, or vacation, schools; ungraded schools for incorrigibles and truants; and evening schools. Kindergartens were frequently established in connection with the public schools, when financed at least in part, by private individuals, associations, or clubs.<sup>84</sup> Such conditions, of course, limited the part the superintendent played in determining the offering of studies. Despite this fact, however, and despite cases such as the superintendent's relation to the evening schools of Providence,<sup>85</sup> in the majority of cities the superintendent was a member of the committee which made plans for the opening of these various schools and he was usually the most important member.

Attention will now be given to provisions made to facilitate carrying out the course of studies, namely libraries and textbooks. Libraries were not a large problem, being given very little consideration in many cities. In Buffalo, however, in 1841 the superintendent was requested by the council to report the "present condition and disposition of

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8, 1877.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36, 1878.

<sup>83</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 1, 1870.

<sup>84</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 40-41, 1883; p. 46, 1890.

<sup>85</sup> *Ante*, pp.158-159.

the city library.”<sup>86</sup> In 1843 the superintendent reported that there were no more than three thousand volumes in the library, of which “a part . . . is at all times in the several districts, placed under the charge of the teachers for the use of the scholars; while much the larger portion of it remains under the charge of the superintendent for the accommodation of the citizens at large.”<sup>87</sup> He urged that a librarian be employed “to take charge of the library, deliver and receive books, see to the district libraries and keep the books in repair,” so that he himself could devote his time to the schools. The following year the superintendent reported that all books for children were distributed to the district libraries, and the teachers were required to have them open for a period on Saturday, so that all children, whether in public, private, or no school at all, would have access to them. While his duties were lighter, since only adults now visited the central library and required library service of him,<sup>88</sup> in 1845 the superintendent again urged the placing of the library under a librarian, and in 1846 council made such arrangements.

Superintendent Divoll, of St. Louis, in 1860 urged the board of directors of the schools to establish a public school library, to be under the control of the board, establishment to be effected by an appropriation from the public school fund. Due to the unavailability of funds at the time, action was postponed, but the superintendent solicited funds from individuals and, in 1865, had a Library Society incorporated, independent of the school board.<sup>89</sup> Two years later the library was placed under the control of the board of directors of the schools and the superintendent was declared librarian.<sup>90</sup> Later a librarian other than the superintendent was appointed, but the library maintained its close connection with the schools as an agency established for their use. To

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<sup>86</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, City Council*, March 10, 1841.

<sup>87</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 10, 1843.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5, 1844.

<sup>89</sup> St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Directors*, pp. 144-145, 1870.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85, 1867.

Divoll must go the credit for this development. The Public Library of Kansas City had a similar development, in that it was a part of the public educational system developed by the board of education. Mr. Craig, agent of the board of education, and Superintendent Greenwood discharged jointly the duties of librarian from 1874 to 1881, when the superintendent was ordered to engage a librarian. During the latter years of this period, Greenwood served as night librarian, in addition to certain hours in the day, from December first to April first from seven to ten o'clock every evening in the week except Sunday.<sup>91</sup> In Denver one of the first duties of the superintendent was "to collect all books outstanding in the public school library, to classify and arrange the same, to report the number and character of the books, to prepare a report on their condition and a tabular list of said books for the publication of a catalogue of same."<sup>92</sup> In Rochester the superintendent, as "general librarian," had charge of all the books in the libraries of the several schools, was responsible for their preservation and delivery to his successor, and annually was required to prepare a catalogue of books belonging to the libraries, giving the number and title of each book.<sup>93</sup> The superintendent in Baltimore selected most of the books when a public school library was established.<sup>94</sup> Guidance in the selection and distribution of library books was a duty of superintendents in a number of other cities.

Textbooks are of considerably more importance than libraries in their relation to the program of studies. This relation is shown by actions such as that of the superintendent of schools in San Francisco, who found it necessary, in 1870, to prepare a new manual of instruction when the state board of education changed several of the most

<sup>91</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, p. 18, 1892-1893.

<sup>92</sup> Denver, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 14, 1871.

<sup>93</sup> Rochester, *By-Laws of the Board of Education and Regulations of the Public Schools*, pp. 18-21, 1851.

<sup>94</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 11, 1880.

important series of textbooks.<sup>95</sup> A somewhat similar situation was found in Cleveland, where the superintendent found it necessary to rewrite the course of study because of the adoption of many new textbooks by the board of education.<sup>96</sup>

In considering problems in connection with textbooks, attention will be given first to Buffalo. In 1846 the superintendent reported that the "multiplicity of textbooks, and the imperfection of some of them is one of the greatest evils at present felt in the public schools . . . . The efforts of persons interested in the publication and sale of new books, directed to particular points, have produced changes in the textbooks of different schools or classes and will continue to do so as there is no regulation to prevent it . . . . Parents are subjected to the expense of purchasing new books whenever scholars are removed from one district to another."<sup>97</sup> In 1848 these matters received special attention and efforts to secure adoption of similar books throughout the city were reported to have been "crowned with almost complete success."<sup>98</sup> The superintendent, in 1850, attacked the teachers who continued to sell textbooks even though such practice was "inhibited by the school ordinances."<sup>99</sup> He explained that confidence was impaired because parents were led to think that their children were required to purchase books from the teacher for her benefit. Despite these efforts, the superintendent reported, in 1853, that want of uniformity of textbooks in grammar and geography had continued a cause of just complaint until it was determined that year, by resolution of the school committee, to adopt Olney's Geography for all the schools of the city.<sup>100</sup> Further light is thrown on practices by the statement of the superintendent in 1850:

"The extension of public school systems over numerous states

<sup>95</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 63, 1870.

<sup>96</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 33, 1897.

<sup>97</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 14, 1846.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15, 1848.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, 1850.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9, 1853.



has had the effect of producing a great plethora in the publication of textbooks . . . . The supply is greater than the demand. Consequently large numbers of itinerant agents are employed by authors and publishers to force their productions upon the public. A large portion of the time of teachers and school officers is thus taken up . . . without any corresponding benefit. The methods used by these agents to dispose of their wares, like those of peddlers, are not always of the most honorable kind. An economy of time at least would be accomplished if school committees should adopt a rule not to grant personal interviews to book agents, permitting them at their option to leave with the committee copies of their works for convenient perusal."<sup>101</sup>

Textbooks later became the cause of much political controversy at the time when superintendents were popularly elected. In Buffalo, Fox was attacked vigorously, when he ran for reelection, because he had attempted to secure a change in some of the textbooks while he was superintendent. Book agents were claimed to be in town "with funds to carry the election in favor of the man who will open the gates to their interest."<sup>102</sup>

Difficulty in proper textbook selection was also encountered because of the persistence of publishing firms. In 1863 when it was proposed to discontinue the purchase of a series of books which had been in use for sixteen years, a local publishing firm struggled for three or four weeks to prevent the change. They also sent "to Boston to procure the services of a book agent, who considered himself fully equal to the task for which he had been engaged; to say nothing of the two or three lawyers employed by this establishment for the purpose of endeavoring to convince the superintendent and the committee on schools that they were doing a most *unrighteous* act in not allowing *their* books to remain longer in the public schools—failing in this, they caused circulars to be published, reflecting upon the character, intelligence, and honesty of the school authorities, charging them with fraud and corruption."<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14, 1850.

<sup>102</sup> Buffalo, *Daily Courier*, October 31, 1879.

<sup>103</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 53, 1863.

In Rochester there was still a great variety of books in use in the schools in 1844, although the board of education had taken action on the subject. The evil was not totally remedied because of the want of proper coöperation on the part of the trustees in some of the districts. In San Francisco the superintendent spoke of the "miscellany of textbooks" as one of the drawbacks which gave rise to "merited complaint." He said of this textbook situation: "Besides being a positive evil, a hindrance to the pupil and the general progress of the school, it was to the parent not only an annoyance but a source of great expense—particularly if the family moved from one district to another."<sup>104</sup> A uniform series of textbooks was adopted and ended this unsatisfactory condition. In Milwaukee, however, until 1860, although the board of commissioners adopted uniform books, "teachers with the consent of the commissioners of their wards, had introduced textbooks different from those adopted by the board."<sup>105</sup>

In Brooklyn, until 1848, pupils purchased books wherever they desired. In that year the board of education established a school depot in charge of the superintendent, whose duty it was to sell the books to the students. The operation of the depot simplified the securing of books, lowered the cost some twenty-five per cent, and led to desirable "perfect uniformity."<sup>106</sup> In Baltimore the members of the committee on textbooks, the president of the board related, toiled "night and day in their efforts to secure for the schools the latest and best textbooks, examining and investigating the many books submitted to them, eliminating from the list many antiquated and unfit books and substituting therefor improved and modern publications."<sup>107</sup> In Milwaukee the com-

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<sup>104</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 19-20, 1854.

<sup>105</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 61, 1864; Stearns, T. W., *Columbian History of Education in Wisconsin*, pp. 446-467.

<sup>106</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 18, 1851.

<sup>107</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 10, 1897.

mittee examined books in use and recommended the adoption of new ones.<sup>108</sup> By resolution of the board it was provided that books could not be changed oftener than once in five years. Superintendent Sears, of Newark, stated that the board attached much importance to the judgment of the principals, and that when a decided majority of the teachers agreed upon a certain book it was usually adopted.<sup>109</sup> In Washington the supervising principals met with the superintendent, by direction of the board of trustees, to revise or suggest revisions of the textbook list.<sup>110</sup>

The free textbook question was another in the solution of which the superintendent frequently participated, and if free textbooks were decided upon, the responsibility of the superintendent was generally increased. In New Haven, when the town voted an appropriation for free books, the committee on textbooks gathered together samples from the various publishing houses, secured the services of several principals to assist in rating the books, and prepared a report. On the matter of geography textbooks the committee reached no decision, but the board came to an agreement after considerable discussion.<sup>111</sup> Committee selections of books without the coöperation of the professional employees at times led to the adoption of poor books. The superintendent of Worcester, for example, in 1860 reported finding the secondary school students "weeping" in dread of mental arithmetic because they could not comprehend the book.<sup>112</sup> In Springfield the lack of free textbooks made efficient conduct of the schools difficult, due to "the want of textbooks on the part of very many pupils" at the beginning of the year. In 1876 the superintendent estimated the loss due to this condition equal to the loss that would have been experienced if all the schools in the city had been

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<sup>108</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 85.

<sup>109</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 48, 1873.

<sup>110</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, June 1, 1891.

<sup>111</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 31, 1890.

<sup>112</sup> Worcester, *Report, School Committee*, p. 16, 1860.

suspended for two entire weeks.<sup>113</sup> The purchase of textbooks by the parents served as a barrier to the introduction of new books, for the people were more conscious of this school expense since they met it directly. At one time the superintendent in Springfield reported in favor of a gradual introduction of a new series of reading books in order to secure more perfect articulation. He mentioned casually that the series of reading books then in use had been adopted nearly twenty-one years before.<sup>114</sup>

In New Orleans, in 1847, a special committee was appointed to select, in coöperation with the superintendent, the textbooks for spelling.<sup>115</sup> Later the committee on textbooks was empowered to make any changes in textbooks which it deemed expedient and proper for the good of the schools.<sup>116</sup> Such extreme power, however, was not usually vested in a committee. In St. Louis, for example, the committee on books, apparatus, and school supplies had to see that each member of the board and each officer was furnished with a copy of the book before it could be presented for adoption.<sup>117</sup> In Chicago, at the board meeting preceding the month of March, the committee on textbooks and course of study reported, making suggestions which it considered proper. At the same meeting any member of the board had the right to propose changes which seemed desirable to him. In Cincinnati when a new textbook in history was needed the appropriate committee reported. Of the committee members, three favored one book and two another; and the board, after full consideration of the books, adopted by a large majority the book favored by the minority of the committee.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 23, 1876.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30, 1877.

<sup>115</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 6, 1847.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 22-23, 1870.

<sup>118</sup> Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1878.

An interesting example of council control of textbooks appeared in Atlanta, where, by ordinance, it was provided that the board of education should have the right thereafter to change books only every five years. The mayor, in approving this ordinance, did so "with the recommendation that provision be made for the introduction of such specially valuable new books as modern thought and progress may produce, and that these be excepted from the five-year period."<sup>119</sup>

In Memphis the selection of textbooks caused interesting conflicts between the superintendent and the board members. In 1886 the superintendent submitted a recommendation that certain readers be adopted. One member of the board moved the adoption of the superintendent's recommendation, while another offered in lieu the adoption of readers of another publishing firm.<sup>120</sup> Finally, after much dickering, the superintendent's recommendation was adopted by one vote. The next year, when the superintendent recommended a certain geography book, a member disagreed with him and urged the adoption of another. It was finally moved that each member of the board examine the two books for himself and be prepared to report at the next meeting. This motion was approved unanimously.<sup>121</sup>

The textbook situation in Boston, as related by a former member of the Boston school committee, warrants presentation. Stating that the feeling that he had to formulate a course of study was oppressive, he continued:

"Nor did I hanker for the opportunity to designate what textbooks should be used in the schools; a task which, in fact, amounts to nothing more than choosing between textbook publishing houses. It would seem as though even a political boss or a machine legislature could be made to understand that a lot of citizens chosen haphazard . . . ought not to be required, and should not be permitted, to decide such questions for eighty thousand children—or for eighty children, for that matter. Of course, it may be said that members of

<sup>119</sup> Atlanta, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 88, 1895.

<sup>120</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, June 14, 1886.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, September 12, 1887.

school committees are not obliged to perform these duties, or, at least, they may be wisely performed perfunctorily, by adopting the suggestions of the board of supervisors, which is supposed to be an advisory body. But, in my experience that is just what a school committee will not do. It may, and often does, ask the supervisors to recommend a textbook. . . . But it does not follow that the expert's recommendation must be accepted, or is even likely to be. I have frequently seen such advice disregarded and sometimes spurned."

He continued, telling of the adoption of the vertical system of writing without the adoption of textbooks to correspond and, as a consequence, the teaching of children the vertical hand in one grade and the sloping hand in the next, or *vice versa*. Finally, after speaking of the "dazzling efforts" and "hypnotic influences" of the publishing houses, he mentioned the fact that the raiders probably did not find it "congenial" to use the tactics they had employed but that they found it absolutely necessary in order to sell books to a board which "invited these ravenous invasions, which are annually made."<sup>122</sup>

In conclusion, the views on this matter of the presidents of two boards of education will be presented. The first shows a lack of comprehension of the problem, for it grants control of courses of study to the superintendent and teachers and assumes textbook control by the board. The second presents an experienced and advanced viewpoint. The president of the Detroit board wrote, in 1887:

"It is principally with the business aspect of educational interests that the board has to deal. . . . Courses of study . . . must of necessity be left very largely to the superintendent and the corps of teachers. It is not rare to read in the newspapers, and to hear from private sources, criticism and condemnation of the work of the schools, not especially of the schools of this city, but of the modern methods of education generally. Comparisons are made with the method of twenty-one and fifty years ago, much to the disadvantage of the present. I confess having shared the feeling that some radical changes in the way our schools are conducted might be made with

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<sup>122</sup> Wetmore, S. A., "Boston School Administration." *Educational Review*, Vol. 14, pp. 107-110, September, 1897.

profit, but such study of the subject as I have been able to get has convinced me that the educated men and women who have given years of study to this matter are more competent to deal with it than I am, and I therefore have no recommendations to make to you upon this branch of your trust except this: get the ablest corps of teachers possible, weigh carefully the arguments of those who condemn the present system, but in adopting changes which are disapproved by those who are making the science of teaching a life work, make haste very slowly.

"With regard to the business interests of the board, I have a few suggestions to make. Each one of you has been bothered more or less during the year, and had your time and patience taxed, by the importunities of book agents. . . . Much of the time of the inspectors has been uselessly consumed by those who are interested in publishing or selling schoolbooks. . . . All this might be avoided by a rule of the board prohibiting consideration of changes except during the summer vacation . . . . The adoption of such a rule as I have suggested would relieve the inspectors of much useless trouble . . . and would reduce the unfavorable criticism to which members are generally unjustly but almost invariably subjected when a schoolbook war is in progress."<sup>123</sup>

The president of the board of school commissioners of Milwaukee had a different idea when he wrote:

"During the past year the question of a change in music books was jointly discussed by the committee on industrial and art education and on textbooks. This afforded me a favorable opportunity to study the subject and I formed the conclusion which I have before made public and beg to repeat here, namely, that the selection of textbooks should be made by the superintendent of schools. He is the paid expert of the board and must be presumed to possess the required knowledge. He has able experts under him upon whom he can call for advice, and has naturally the highest sense of responsibility and accountability for the wisdom of his choice. In as much as the interests involved are of such magnitude and importance, the ultimate decision of all such matters should revert to the board. The superintendent should make recommendations for changes and readoptions, which should either be accepted or rejected by the board, after proper consideration and by a majority vote; if rejected, the whole matter should be referred back to the superintendent and in no event should

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<sup>123</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 7-8, 1887.

the board or its members substitute other textbooks in the place of those recommended by this officer, as in that way, any single member could bring the whole matter back to the original methods."<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of School Commissioners*, pp. 33-34, 1895.



## CHAPTER XII

THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOLS

J. M. Greenwood, arriving in Kansas City to serve as superintendent of schools, soon "discovered that his position required a versatile man, possessed of a splendid disposition, for his duties as superintendent not only called upon him to teach classes but also to oversee janitors, look after school grounds, and patch fences."<sup>1</sup>

Data have been presented<sup>2</sup> from which it can be inferred that not all superintendents had business duties of the type which Greenwood experienced. In fact, because of the retention by the council of the control of finances, buildings, and janitors, the superintendent in many instances had nothing to do with these aspects of the educational service, even in an advisory capacity. A few additional examples are in place here. In Boston, in 1863, complaint was made by the school committee because of "the manner in which the views and wishes of the board have been disregarded by the committee on public buildings."<sup>3</sup> It was urged that the powers of the school committee are "only advisory at a point where they should be determinate and controlling, viz., the construction and furnishing of school buildings." In 1873 the school committee recalled that, while it was true that an ordinance of December 18, 1855 provided that "no school-house should be located, erected, or materially altered until the school committee shall have been consulted on the locality and plans . . . except by order of the City Council," the exception and not the ordinance had prevailed ever since.<sup>4</sup> During the same years the superintendent of public

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<sup>1</sup> Galloway, D., *James Mickleborough Greenwood: An Evaluation of His Services as an Educator and of His Contributions to Educational Thought*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ante*, pp. 149-162.

<sup>3</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 38-39, 1863.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10, 1873.

buildings appointed the janitors of all the "city edifices," including the schools.<sup>5</sup>

Schoolhouse agents were first appointed in Springfield in 1857 by the school committee. In 1860 their appointment was placed in the hands of the council, and it was made their duty "to keep the schoolhouse assigned to their care . . . in good order and repair; and provide fuel and all things necessary for the comfort of the scholars therein, . . . and also do all other duties by law which devolve upon the prudential committee of districts, except selecting and contracting with school-teachers."<sup>6</sup> When the superintendency was established, schoolhouse agents no longer served, and the superintendent assumed their duties, although it was said that the duties classed as strictly educational were of a "higher and more responsible grade" and constituted "more appropriately the superintendent's sphere of effort."<sup>7</sup> In 1868, after the superintendent had carried on this work for a few years, a schoolhouse agent was again appointed by the council, and he looked after "the sweeping and cleaning of schoolrooms, the making of fires, the clearing of sidewalks, the furnishing of drinking cups, of washbasins, of soap and towels, the trifling repairs almost innumerable, . . . the general repairs, and the larger supplies of wood and coal."<sup>8</sup> This dualism in control continued, while the school committeemen considered it unfortunate that they could serve only in an advisory capacity in regard to repairs, furnishings, and building sites and plans. Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the entire situation was that the janitors were appointed, and their work directed, by the committee on city property of the council. This made impossible the supervision and care of the buildings by the principals and took from them much of the responsibility for the physical welfare of their pupils, "upon which the full success of the

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97, 1867.

<sup>6</sup> Springfield, *City Charter and Ordinances*, p. 71, 1860.

<sup>7</sup> Springfield, *School Committee, Rules and Regulations*, pp. 12-14, 1867.

<sup>8</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 24, 1868.

school depends.”<sup>9</sup> As a result of this system, the school committee reported, in 1889, that the “schoolrooms are swept and dusted only twice a week, and floors and furniture washed only once a year.”<sup>10</sup> A few years later “cleaner schoolhouses” were mentioned by the school committee as a “crying demand” about which they could do nothing, as the work was in the hands of the city property committee.<sup>11</sup>

A condition somewhat similar to that in Springfield existed in Washington, where the commissioners appointed a supervisor of public school buildings and janitors to act for them so far as it was their duty to see that the “several public schoolrooms were maintained in the most favorable sanitary condition practicable with respect to cleanliness, heat, ventilation, and that the fuel is properly supplied and economically used.” This supervisor instructed the janitors in their work and reported neglect, incapacity, or other undesirable conditions to the commissioners of the District of Columbia.<sup>12</sup>

These examples illustrate control of the business duties directly by the council or commissioners and by an agent of the council other than the superintendent. In each of these cities, as well as in Washington, Atlanta, Worcester, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, the board of education was for a time controlled by the council. The amount of responsibility delegated to the board varied. In Washington the board of trustees was prohibited by law from spending more than fifty dollars for improvements upon any schoolhouse without written authority from the mayor or an act of the council.<sup>13</sup> In cities where control over finances was exercised by the council the board of education generally secured control first over the incidentals and last over the construc-

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22, 1887.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20, 1889.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17, 1894.

<sup>12</sup> District of Columbia, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 13, 1888.

<sup>13</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 9-10, 1868.

tion of buildings, since they demanded a greater outlay of money. The superintendent had no control or responsibility in regard to these matters until the board of education delegated it to him.

In the cities discussed, in which the council exercised control, as well as in cities where no such control existed, when the board of education took over the control of the business aspect of the educational service, its members frequently carried on the work directly. The committee on salaries and supplies appointed the janitors in Atlanta.<sup>14</sup> In Chicago, where the ordinance establishing the superintendency specified that the work of the superintendent should be confined to educational duties, the chairman of the committee on buildings and grounds looked after the heating, repairs, and securing of coal and wood for all the schools.<sup>15</sup> While the superintendent assisted him in this work, it required the committee chairman's constant care and attention for there was wasting of fuel, general complaining of all kinds, and endangering of the health of the children, which required investigation and judicious care. To insure the early completion of a building in Pittsburgh, as well as to secure faithful adherence to specifications on the part of the contractors, a member of the building committee was designated to superintend the work.<sup>16</sup>

When a question arose as to the actual condition of the school buildings in San Francisco in 1885, the city was divided into districts and each director was assigned to the inspection of a certain number of schoolhouses. Each made a report in writing to the committee on schoolhouses and sites on each building he examined, listing as "A" repairs "urgently necessary" and as "B" repairs "necessary and advantageous."<sup>17</sup> This study served as a basis for repairs

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<sup>14</sup> Atlanta, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 48, 1887.

<sup>15</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 9-10, 1862.

<sup>16</sup> Pittsburgh, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 76, 1871.

<sup>17</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 11-12, 1892.

and the future building program. The sanitary committee of the Newark board of education looked after the yards, drainage, disinfection, and arrangement of seats in regard to light.<sup>18</sup> The president of the board of Jersey City in 1892 alluded to the great amount of time required of the members, especially in regard to the oversight of buildings. He urged the employment of a special official, to be designated as "inspector of school buildings," to relieve the members of this work.<sup>19</sup> In 1896, however, the repairs were made "in the same manner . . . each member superintending his own work and thereby saving the expense of an architect."<sup>20</sup> The committee on school houses and school rooms in Washington annually inspected all buildings and rooms, noting especially methods of ventilation and security from fire and accident and reporting to the board desired improvements.<sup>21</sup> In Indianapolis, the trustee of each ward, with the treasurer, was charged with the duty of ordering necessary repairs in such ward, renting schools during the summer vacation, and exercising care and oversight for the protection of the buildings.<sup>22</sup> A year or two later the trustee alone was charged with this duty and was required to report at each meeting of the board.<sup>23</sup> Similar requirement that the trustee look after the school or schools in his ward or district existed in Kansas City (1867),<sup>24</sup> Louisville (1853),<sup>25</sup> and Cleveland (1860).<sup>26</sup> Two systems of direct control are noted in general. In one, the trustee looked after the schools of his district; in the other, a committee cared for the buildings throughout the city. The trivial type of materials with which board members busied themselves at times is shown by the action of the board of school commissioners of Bal-

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<sup>18</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 40, 1892.

<sup>19</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 11-12, 1892.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1, 1896.

<sup>21</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, p. 41, 1864.

<sup>22</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, May 14, 1861.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, June 6, 1863.

<sup>24</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 24, 1867.

<sup>25</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, December 30, 1853.

<sup>26</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 9, 1860.

timore which, as late as 1898, granted each school individually requisitions for wastebaskets, ash cans, wheelbarrows, water containers, et cetera.<sup>27</sup>

While, in some instances, the committees or trustees continued to exercise a direct control after the appointment of a superintendent, it was the usual thing, if no official had been appointed to look after business duties, to make the superintendent a member of the committees on buildings, finance, heating and ventilation, as well as of the committees engaged in more purely educational activities. Also, in places where the superintendent was not a member of the committee he frequently served in an advisory capacity, because he possessed a more intimate knowledge of affairs than did anyone else. In Boston, for example, the duties of the superintendent, as first defined, required that he "consult with the different bodies who have control in the building and altering of schoolhouses, and those through whom either directly or indirectly the school money is expended, that there may result more uniformity in their plans and more economy in their expenditures."<sup>28</sup> Whenever a new building or alterations to a building were considered the superintendent of New Orleans was required to "communicate with the building committee such information on the subject as he may possess, and shall suggest such plans for the same as he considers best for the health and convenience of the teachers and pupils and most economical for the board."<sup>29</sup>

Where the local trustee system continued, the part the superintendent played was less important than where the committee system existed, for the local trustees were greater in numbers and had an interest in, and knowledge of, their locality not generally found when a small committee was in charge of the entire city. In many cities this led, very early, to the belief held by the president of the Chi-

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<sup>27</sup> Baltimore, *Minutes, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, April 25, 1898.

<sup>28</sup> Boston, *City Document No. 16*, pp. 19-20, 1852.

<sup>29</sup> New Orleans, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 24, 1864.

cago board, who stated, in an address to the board members, that the more you refrain "from handling details in . . . business departments, but content yourselves with laying down general lines of work and policy, and holding the proper subordinate responsible for results, the better it will be for the school system and for you."<sup>30</sup> Certainly the practice of this principle would have eliminated a considerable amount of the waste which occurred in many cities, particularly in regard to buildings. In Seattle, for example, the buildings erected were not of a type to permit the introduction of the plan of supervision desired.<sup>31</sup>

A discussion of conditions and practices in a number of cities will illustrate the sharing of control by the board and the superintendent and the event to which, in some instances, the superintendent was charged with the business responsibilities. It will also show the various types of business duties in which the superintendents engaged.

The superintendent in Providence spent a great deal of time in the study of plans for buildings. Of particular importance was his plan for ventilation, which was a success and the solution of a perplexing problem. He first perfected a ventilation plan for new structures, and then contrived one which could, without too much expense and labor, be applied to the old buildings.<sup>32</sup> In Buffalo the school buildings were erected according to the same general plan throughout the city and were not adapted to the schools as organized. Improvements in them were effected under the direction of the superintendent, as rapidly as his recommendations were adopted and assessments were made to pay for the improvements.<sup>33</sup> The superintendent annually made a survey of the buildings and, upon the direction of the council, purchased or leased lots for new buildings.<sup>34</sup>

The duties of the superintendent in Buffalo from the es-

<sup>30</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 17, 1890.

<sup>31</sup> Seattle, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 29, 1894.

<sup>32</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 38-39, 1876.

<sup>33</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 9-11, 1867.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55, 1868 and 1869.

establishment of the office were more of a business nature than in most cities. The council, in 1841, ordered him to purchase wood, contract for its sawing, make additions to or about schoolhouses, make all necessary purchases, et cetera.<sup>35</sup>

In Indianapolis, in 1869, the superintendent was ordered to contract with a plasterer to do repair work in the schoolhouses.<sup>36</sup> In Kansas City the superintendent was authorized to furnish "buckets, brooms, dippers and [make] necessary repairs to school buildings,"<sup>37</sup> and in 1870 he was ordered to secure "suitable blackboards for all the schools." Later it was the practice to advance the superintendent one hundred dollars for incidental expenses, providing him with another hundred upon receiving a report of the expenditure of the previous amount.<sup>38</sup> The superintendent in Denver submitted a bid for supplying school furniture, and, because his bid was the lowest, the contract was awarded to him.<sup>39</sup> The superintendent in Springfield handled the furnishing of books to the pupils at cost, and when free books were introduced in 1884, he saw to their distribution.<sup>40</sup> He prepared the tuition bills for out-of-town students<sup>41</sup> and represented the school committee in its advisory capacity to the committee of the city council which selected sites and erected school buildings.<sup>42</sup>

The superintendent in Washington was required to prepare for presentation to the council a statement of the amount of necessary appropriations for the support of the public schools.<sup>43</sup> Whenever furniture was "placed and screwed down," it was his duty to be present for the pur-

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<sup>35</sup> Buffalo, *Minutes, City Council*, March 18, 1841; March 23, 1841.

<sup>36</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 21, 1869.

<sup>37</sup> Kansas City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 16, 1868.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, July 1, 1875.

<sup>39</sup> Denver, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 11, 1873.

<sup>40</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 11, 1868; p. 23, 1884.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix, n. p. 1892.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, 1900.

<sup>43</sup> Washington, *Abstract of Proceedings, Board of Trustees*, September 20, 1870; *Annual Report*, p. 183, 1866-1870.



pose of seeing to it that the best arrangement was made.<sup>44</sup> He also had to approve all supplies received; keep accurate accounts of the distribution of supplies; check on the janitors' assistants, sweepers, and firemen, to see that they received a proper salary from the janitors and were efficient;<sup>45</sup> and study all the details of good schoolhouse construction.<sup>46</sup> One of the commissioners, in speaking of the qualifications of a superintendent for Washington, stated that they wanted a man who possessed the "dual character of a good educator and a good administrative officer. They wanted a man who could be entrusted with the management of the financial affairs of the schools . . . a man who would not ask for more that was needed and would get all the material or service he paid for . . . They wanted a superintendent who could tell good service when he saw it and tell a good broom when it was paid for."<sup>47</sup>

In Cleveland the superintendent examined the heating apparatus,<sup>48</sup> examined and approved all bills before payment was made,<sup>49</sup> figured the cost per pupil in each of the departments, and collected tuition for the same from out-of-town students,<sup>50</sup> surveyed schoolhouses, one time reporting thirty rented rooms of which "11 were in churches, 9 in saloon buildings, 2 in a refitted stable, 5 in dwelling houses, 2 in storerooms, and one in a society hall."<sup>51</sup> In Savannah,<sup>52</sup> Atlanta,<sup>53</sup> and Memphis,<sup>54</sup> the superintendent received all tu-

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<sup>44</sup> Washington, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, October 12, 1875.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, October 12, 1880.

<sup>46</sup> Wilson, J. O., "Eighty Years of Public Schools of Washington 1805-1885." United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, Vol. II, p. 1696, 1894-1895.

<sup>47</sup> Washington, *Evening Star*, April 14, 1855.

<sup>48</sup> Cleveland, *Minutes, Board of Education*, August 31, 1858.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, September 14, 1858.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, May 2, 1859.

<sup>51</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 22-23, 1885.

<sup>52</sup> Savannah, *Minutes, Board of Education*, April 8, 1867; May 13, 1867; July 29, 1867.

<sup>53</sup> Atlanta, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 28, 1876.

<sup>54</sup> Memphis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, December 14, 1885.

ition payments and turned them over to the treasurer periodically.

The superintendent was also secretary of the board of education in many cities before they became very large. This was the case in Worcester, Springfield, Savannah, Wilmington, Louisville, San Francisco, Seattle, New Orleans, and Newark. In Newark the superintendent, in his capacity as secretary and to some extent as treasurer, supervised all departments of expenditure, keeping accurate accounts of all transactions.<sup>55</sup> He also had the duty of drawing all supplies from the depository; advising in the construction, heating and ventilating of school buildings; and preparing the payroll of teachers and janitors each month. The superintendent in New Haven regarded it as part of his duty to suggest to the board of education methods of economizing, such as hiring women at half the expense of men as teachers and assistants in the schools.<sup>56</sup> He also kept account of expenses, figured costs per scholar, building and improvement costs, et cetera.<sup>57</sup> In Nashville the superintendent received his full salary during the time the schools were suspended because of the onerous and unremitted work he performed on the committee on schoolhouses and property.<sup>58</sup>

The superintendent of St. Louis received a hundred-dollar fund for incidental expenses, a report on which he made each month.<sup>59</sup> He also supervised the janitors and secured the best rooms he could for schools.<sup>60</sup> Superintendent Binford, of Richmond, found the selection, alteration, and furnishing of buildings one of his greatest tasks.<sup>61</sup> In Louisville the superintendent was authorized to rent the schoolhouses needed, making the "best contracts" possible in

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<sup>55</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 5, 1869; p. 57, 1877.

<sup>56</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 36, 1865.

<sup>57</sup> New Haven, *Minutes, Board of Education*, September 21, 1883.

<sup>58</sup> Nashville, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 25, 1862.

<sup>59</sup> St. Louis, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 7, 1841.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, October 12, 1841; February 19, 1850; June 14, 1881.

<sup>61</sup> Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 21, 1871.

writing.<sup>62</sup> He also supervised janitors and served in an advisory capacity in regard to buildings.<sup>63</sup>

Of more importance was the disbursement of school moneys. Moneys appropriated by the council, or secured otherwise, came into his hands for disbursement to teachers for services, to janitors for supplies, et cetera. To insure the faithful discharge of this service he was under a ten-thousand dollar bond.<sup>64</sup> The superintendent of San Francisco had a similar duty in regard to school funds during the very early period. On December 10, 1852, by ordinance, the city council of San Francisco appropriated \$2,050 to the superintendent of schools "to be dispersed by the said superintendent under the supervision of the board of education for the payment of rents and repairs and furnishing of school-houses, the salaries of superintendent and teachers of said schools, and incidental expenses."<sup>65</sup> In 1856, the board of education ordered the superintendent of schools of San Francisco to pay to each of the sixty teachers employed the sum of \$150, and to the former superintendent \$200.<sup>66</sup>

In Baltimore discrepancies, freely admitted, in relation to public school buildings led to calling upon the superintendent to prepare plans for buildings and to "cause the same to be engraved and stereotyped for use whenever required."<sup>67</sup> The superintendent of Portland drew plans for seats and backs, and asked various parties to make bids for making them.<sup>68</sup> He was authorized to have all necessary repairs made.<sup>69</sup> In Boston the superintendent worked with the architect in the preparation of model schoolroom

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<sup>62</sup> Louisville, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, July 5, 1852.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, April 2, 1860; March 4, 1861.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, April 4, 1853.

<sup>65</sup> San Francisco, *Ordinances, City Council*, 1853-1854, Joint Resolution 272.

<sup>66</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Evening Bulletin*, March 20, 1856.

<sup>67</sup> Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, p. 49, 1867.

<sup>68</sup> Portland, *Minutes, Board of Directors*, April 8, 1881.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, November 22, 1873.

designs adapted to the prevalent organization of the schools in the city.<sup>70</sup>

With this evidence of the superintendent's handling or coöperating in the handling of business affairs one arrives at the conclusion reached by Hancock, that the superintendent "is often the financial adviser of his board of education; and hence as a rule ought to be a clear-headed man of business. He is still more frequently the architect who plans our school buildings, being careful to see that they are supplied with proper provisions for heating, ventilation, and light. He also recommends the furniture which he deems best suited to the comfort and health of pupils and selects . . . apparatus necessary."<sup>71</sup>

This statement presents the situation in the majority of cities at the time it was made, that is, in 1875. In most cities the superintendent had come to assume more and more of the business duties. Exceptions to this rule occurred in Philadelphia, where the office of superintendent of buildings was established many years before the superintendency;<sup>72</sup> in New York, where the secretary cared for the business duties, the superintendent spending his time examining applicants for positions and in supervising;<sup>73</sup> and in few other cities. While Adams exaggerated the business side of a superintendent's duties in the early years of the superintendency, there is some truth in his statement that "the crying need of the common school thirty or forty years ago<sup>74</sup> was a material one and the possibilities of the situation were not appreciated. The schoolhouse, the window, the outhouse, the desk, the map, the slate, and the textbook all stood in pressing need of intelligent reforming. The low, dark, ill-ventilated, dirty room, with its long row of benches and continuous desks, hacked and disfigured by the

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<sup>70</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 223-225, 1864.

<sup>71</sup> *A History of Education in the State of Ohio*. Centennial Volume, p. 354.

<sup>72</sup> Philadelphia, *Report, Board of Controllers*, pp. 23-24, 1868; pp. 12-13, 1869; *Report, Board of Public Education*, p. 22, 1883.

<sup>73</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 5-6, 1867.

<sup>74</sup> Written in 1880.

jackknives of succeeding generations, had slowly to give place to something better. One thing at a time, and this was the first work of the superintendency. It was a necessary rather than a great work. The office also was a new one and those who filled it were in no way specially trained for it. They were looked upon with suspicion by the school committees and there was a general disposition to make them as nearly as possible mere purchasing agents or superintendents of . . . repairs. Perhaps the two great monuments of this early period are the foursquare schoolhouse and the separate desk. They are good monuments too."<sup>75</sup>

It must be kept in mind that throughout this period in many cities these duties were not regarded as the proper ones for a superintendent. Higginson spoke of the superintendent of Providence as having, until 1876, "in addition to his ordinary duties, . . . the care of all the schoolhouses, estates and school apparatus, and under the executive committee [he] attended to making repairs and furnishing schoolrooms with furniture."<sup>76</sup>

The superintendent of San Francisco urged, in 1867, the creation of the office of assistant superintendent, holding that "unless the superintendent be relieved of most of those general business duties which he has now to perform, he must of necessity leave undone the most legitimate and appropriate duties of his office, to wit, the visiting of schools, advising with teachers and pupils, suggesting and illustrating improved methods of instruction, examining and promoting pupils, attending to the interior and special care of schools. This is the important work of the superintendent."<sup>77</sup> The following year the same recommendation was made on the ground that the superintendent's "real duties, . . . superintending and supervising the instruction and education of the youths attending our public schools, must neces-

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<sup>75</sup> Adams, C. F., "Scientific Common School Education." *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, pp. 935-941, Vol. 61, November, 1880.

<sup>76</sup> Higginson, T. W., *History of Education in Rhode Island*, p. 196.

<sup>77</sup> San Francisco, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 64-65, 1867.

sarily be very much neglected”<sup>78</sup> while he attends to business duties.

The superintendent of Rochester, in urging the appointment of a superintendent of buildings in 1871, stated: “The board of education has now in charge city property to the amount of more than \$300,000, the valuation of which is steadily increasing, while each year there are additions made to this amount by buildings, repairs, et cetera. The nature of the buildings makes it necessary that they should be looked after constantly. It will be conceded by all, I think, that the time of the superintendent can be more profitably employed *inside* the buildings.”<sup>79</sup>

The superintendent of Buffalo, in 1865, after pointing out that “the superintendent’s time and attention are unavoidably diverted from the internal affairs of the schoolroom” on account of business duties, urged a change in the charter, “authorizing the election or appointment of an officer whose duty it shall be to supervise the making of repairs, the purchase of materials and supplies, and the construction of schoolhouses, et cetera.” He believed that “the adoption of such a measure would be saving of expense, would promote the interests of the schools, and protect the rights of taxpayers. The expediency and economy of the measure, it appears to me, cannot be doubted, and they will become still more apparent when we consider the fact that the population of the city is rapidly increasing, and that . . . new schoolhouses . . . must be erected annually . . . . When our free school system was first organized the number of schools and the pupils attending them were comparatively limited; and the labor of overseeing these and supplying all their necessities was not a difficult task for one man to perform.”<sup>80</sup>

In Washington the president of the board of trustees urged the appointment of an assistant superintendent “to

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53, 1868.

<sup>79</sup> Rochester, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 54-55, 1871.

<sup>80</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, pp. 24-25, 1865.

relieve the superintendent of the business details attendant upon the conduct of the schools." To illustrate the necessity of such an officer, he stated that the superintendent is "required to devote fully one half of his time to such details as ascertaining the necessity for and procuring repairs to the school furniture throughout the school buildings in his charge, the purchase and distribution of fuel to the different school buildings, searching for and arranging for the rental of school buildings, superintending the distribution and collection of free textbooks, furnishing minor supplies, and the like." If the assistant performed this work the superintendent could then devote his whole "time for the more important work of supervising and directing the educational work."<sup>81</sup> Similar recommendations were made in 1898 by the president of the board.<sup>82</sup>

In Chicago, in 1878, the president of the board of education stated: "The departments of business and of instruction should be divorced and kept as distinct as may be, in order that justice may be done to both. The superintendent should be permitted to give his time exclusively to purely educational matters and not be hampered with details that do not legitimately belong to his office."<sup>83</sup> In Detroit, as in a number of other cities, when professional duties became heavy it was urged that the superintendent be relieved of the duty of acting as secretary to the board.<sup>84</sup> In Milwaukee, the act requiring the superintendent to have experience in the art of instruction was considered important as regards "the appropriate work of the superintendent," for it further provided for the appointment of a clerk to take charge of the office and do such work as the "board or superintendent may direct."<sup>85</sup> An act passed in 1871, which authorized the

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<sup>81</sup> Washington, *Annual Report, Board of Trustees*, pp. 11-12, 1894-1895.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, 1897-1898.

<sup>83</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 34, 1878.

<sup>84</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 11-12, 1871.

<sup>85</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 49-50, 1866.

appointment of a secretary of the board, whose duty it was "to attend to the *general* business of the department," was regarded by the superintendent as absolutely necessary in order that he might "devote his entire attention to his appropriate and legitimate duties of visiting schools, advising with teachers and parents, and supervising the organization and classification of schools."<sup>86</sup>

One assignment of increased business duties for the superintendent was found in the last quarter of the century in the cities studied. It was due to personal considerations rather than administrative desirability. The secretary, who had served the board for many years, resigned because of ill health, but the board of education induced him to continue, relieving him of all duties which required regular office hours. The duties of which he was relieved, such as purchasing small supplies, attending to small repairs, and enforcing the truancy laws, were assigned to the superintendent,<sup>87</sup> who was then permitted to employ clerical help.

The business manager came into being chiefly for two reasons, the first of which was to relieve the board of education of the heavy duties which devolved upon it. This was true to an extent in Philadelphia, where a superintendent of buildings was appointed many years before the establishment of the superintendency.<sup>88</sup> It was also true in New York, where the secretary of the board had so many duties that a committee from Boston stated that "his office is the center around which the whole work revolves, the point from which essentially everything emanates and to which it returns."<sup>89</sup> The secretary's office was the center of the "material administration" of the system and the superintendent's office the center of its "intellectual and moral efficiency." In Brooklyn the reason for the establishment of the office of superintendent of buildings in 1856 was the same, even

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71, 1872.

<sup>87</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 22, 1883.

<sup>88</sup> Philadelphia, *Annual Report, Board of Controllers*, pp. 23-24, 1868.

<sup>89</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, pp. 5-6, 1867.



though the superintendency had already been established.<sup>90</sup> That such a development was desirable in some cities even after the superintendency existed, due to the fact that the superintendent lacked power, is illustrated by the situation in Philadelphia where, as late as 1905, it was necessary to dismiss some schools for lack of coal when others had full coal bins, and where schools were dismissed because heating plants were out of repair even though this condition was known before the summer vacation.<sup>91</sup>

The second reason for the appointment of a business manager was the great amount of work placed upon the superintendents. A business department, established in the main for this reason sometimes had charge largely of building supervision or merely of the purchasing of supplies, whereas in other cases it looked after buildings, supplies, janitorial service, et cetera. This cause was a potent one in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The idea of making the new officer dependent upon the superintendent was not generally advanced, due probably to the fact that dualisms were usual, that the superintendent was not an able enough man in many instances to make unitary control appear desirable, and that in many cases members of boards of education were still executors and saw unity, not in a corps of trained officers, but rather in the board of education. Conflicts between the board of education, the sectional or local boards, and the council served to continue in the minds of the board members the idea of the importance of the board as a center and to prevent the creation of responsible officers with large powers.

The arguments to-day against dual control were not advanced at the time it was developing. Minneapolis,<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Brooklyn, *Manual, Board of Education*, p. 18, 1873.

<sup>91</sup> Philadelphia, Public Education Association, *A Generation of Progress*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>92</sup> Minneapolis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 46, 1836.

Newark,<sup>93</sup> Baltimore,<sup>94</sup> Detroit,<sup>95</sup> Chicago,<sup>96</sup> Providence,<sup>97</sup> and other cities were added to the list of those already having dual control. That the duties of the superintendent of instruction of Omaha were strictly educational is shown by the statement of the superintendent: "He has no more to do with matters of finance than the humblest teacher or janitor. He contracts no bills; he fixes no salaries; he is not required to make recommendations affecting expenses; and he is responsible for nothing in the way of financial management."<sup>98</sup> As a result of the spread of the idea of dual control Boykin stated, in 1897, that the system in the majority of American cities provided as "principal executive officers a secretary and superintendent; the former to look after the details of their business affairs, and the latter to have especial care of all matters relating to instruction."<sup>99</sup>

A few quotations will illustrate the acceptance of the dual system as most desirable. Draper said in 1897:

"All details of administration should be separated into two great executive departments: one to manage the business affairs and the other the instruction. The heads of these departments may be appointed by the board, but their terms should be long and perhaps indefinite and their powers should be wholly independent and fully prescribed by statute.

"The business department should have charge of all the property interests of the schools . . . . The head of this department must be a business man of good experience and well-known independence and probity who is strongly sympathetic with the noble ends for which the public schools stand.

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<sup>93</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 85, 1869; p. 131, 1875.

<sup>94</sup> Baltimore, *Rules of Order and Regulations for the Government of the Schools*, pp. 9, 74, 1887.

<sup>95</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 1, 1875.

<sup>96</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 14, 1865.

<sup>97</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 20-21, 1896-1897.

<sup>98</sup> Omaha, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 88-89, 1891.

<sup>99</sup> Boykin, J., "Organization of City School Boards." *Educational Review*, p. 232, Vol. 13, March, 1897.

"The department of instruction should be headed by an expert in pedagogical science and administration."<sup>100</sup>

Pickard, in 1883, had a similar understanding of the problem when he said:

"A system of public school has two sides, at least—the *business* side and the *instruction* side—distinct, and yet allied in defensive and offensive operations. Each needs watchful care that neither may trench upon the province of the other . . . . In our larger cities there is a favorable opportunity for an entire separation of these elements in administration. In the smaller cities there may be a twofold use of the superintendent—a necessity to be deprecated; and as soon as possible the superintendent should be relieved of all mere business duties, except as advisory in matters which bring business and instruction into close relationship . . . . But, even here . . . it is better that the action of each side should be entirely distinct, free from direct interference with the specific work of the other, and yet understood as affording moral support."<sup>101</sup>

B. A. Hinsdale and E. E. White also advocated for large cities the plan of having a business manager and superintendent independent of each other.<sup>102</sup> A commission appointed by the mayor of New York proposed a law, in 1894, providing for the appointment of a superintendent of school buildings and supplies and a city superintendent, each for a term of five years. This element of the proposed enactment caused little comment; the law met its defeat because of the opposition of inspectors and trustees. It would have legislated the inspectors out of office and would have shorn the trustees of much of their power and patronage.<sup>103</sup>

The National Education Association, committee of fifteen on elementary education, stated that the "circumstances

<sup>100</sup> Draper, A. S., *The Crucial Test of the Public School System*, pp. 12-14.

<sup>101</sup> Pickard, J. T., "City Systems of Management of Public Schools." National Education Association, *Addresses and Journal of Proceedings*, pp. 70-71, 1883; or *Education*, Vol. 4, pp. 90-91, September, 1883.

<sup>102</sup> White, E. E., "Authority of the School Superintendent." National Education Association, *Addresses and Journal of Proceedings*, pp. 314-320, 1899.

<sup>103</sup> Olin, S., "Public School Reform in New York." *Educational Review*, Vol. 8, p. 3, June, 1894.

of the case naturally and quickly separate the duties of administration into two great departments; one which manages the business affairs, and the other which supervises the instruction."<sup>104</sup> The educational commission of Chicago, in 1897, recommended the appointment by the board of education of a business manager and a superintendent, both at a yearly salary not to exceed \$10,000 and under a contract for a term of six years.<sup>105</sup> Concerning this report, S. T. Dutton wrote: "In what you propose respecting the two great phases of school management, that pertaining to the business and that of education, you have not only taken high ground regarding the centralizing of authority in the person of two competent experts, but have placed around these executive heads such safeguards as will prevent possible abuses on the one hand and unnecessary interference on the other."<sup>106</sup>

As a part of the report of the committee on city school systems before the National Council on Education, Aaron Gove spoke of the duties of city superintendents in a very broad sense. Following his address, John Hancock called attention to the part of the report which recommended that "the superintendent be the architect, financial adviser, and general agent of the board." Hancock then asked: "Is not this demanding too much of the superintendent with his other important duties?"<sup>107</sup> Gove replied that his recommendation applied to cities of from twenty thousand to seventy-five thousand inhabitants and not to the largest cities. Pickard believed, however, that even in the largest cities "the superintendent should know something of the principles of architecture, of the laws of ventilation, of the

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<sup>104</sup> National Education Association, *Report, Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Education*, p. 115.

<sup>105</sup> Chicago, *Report, The Educational Commission of the City*, pp. 21, 32.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>107</sup> National Education Association, *Addresses and Journal of Proceedings*, p. 34, 1884.

heating and lighting of buildings, of the arrangement of halls and stairways."<sup>108</sup>

Despite the rather common recognition of the "two great concomitant interests—the one business, the other educational"<sup>109</sup>—there was at times on the part of some a feeling that it was desirable to have them coördinated under unified direction. The president of the Chicago board of education felt this when he urged that the president of the board should stand at the "head of the school system, particularly in business matters, and that he should be responsible for what is being done."<sup>110</sup> The reorganization of the Cleveland schools, with the school director, elected by the people, as the chief executive officer, was the outstanding instance of the working out of such a program. The school director appointed the other officials, including the superintendent of instruction. He was also charged with the financial administration of the schools and had a veto power over the board of education, the responsibility of which was purely legislative. So well was this plan received by educators that, in 1895, the subcommittee<sup>111</sup> on the organization of city school systems, with A. S. Draper as chairman, recommended the adoption of a plan essentially like the one then on trial in Cleveland.<sup>112</sup> Of the members of this subcommittee, Draper, Poland, state superintendent of public instruction in New Jersey, and Powell, superintendent of schools in Washington, D. C., approved it in its entirety. Seaver, superintendent of schools in Boston, objected to the officer's being known as school director, seeing no need for it and fearing that the officer would become part of a political organization and a dispenser of patronage.<sup>113</sup> The fifth and last member of the subcommittee, Lane, superintendent of schools in

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Chicago, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 12, 1896.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21, 1892.

<sup>111</sup> National Education Association, *Report, Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Education*, pp. 114-132.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

Chicago, did not desire to invest the veto power in the school director, but in general he approved of the plan suggested.<sup>114</sup>

Further evidence of the acceptance of the Cleveland plan in principle is found in the report of the Brooklyn advisory committee on public education in 1895. This committee recommended the appointment by the mayor of a commissioner of education for a term of five years. It was to be the duty of the commissioner to formulate and present to the board of education, for its approval, plans of administrative policy; to supervise and direct the work of the various bureaus and departments; to direct the financial administration; to veto appropriations made by the board; to appoint the officers, including a superintendent of public instruction, subject to confirmation by the board.<sup>115</sup> As in the Cleveland plan and in the plan proposed by the subcommittee of the committee of fifteen, the superintendent of instruction was given large responsibility in connection with the selection and dismissal of teachers, supervision of instruction, and other purely educational matters. The Brooklyn proposal provided appointment of the superintendent for five years, with dismissal by a majority of the board of education upon recommendation of the commissioner.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that small cities did not experience so great a need of two responsible executive officers as was the case in the larger cities. Among educators there was an almost unanimous agreement that administration should be separated into two great independent departments, one in charge of business and the other of instruction. Toward the close of the century the superintendent was not so likely to develop into the chief executive officer, as was the business manager. This movement would have made the superintendent a responsible

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>115</sup> Brooklyn, *Report of Brooklyn Advisory Committee on Public Education*, pp. 4-5, 16-18.

executive officer, but in charge of instruction only. Educators desired the withdrawal from the superintendent of the business duties concerning which he had advised, which he had shared with committees, or which he had executed during most of the nineteenth century.

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## CHAPTER XIII

## THE SUPERINTENDENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The necessity of an adequate and proper public relations program, developed and executed by the superintendent of schools, is evinced by the record of many educators who failed to achieve in any significant way. The *Educational Review*, in lamenting the unwillingness of boards of education to follow trained and skilled professional leadership, editorially commented: "Exposition, argument, demonstration, illustration—perpetual and patient—are needed to keep any city school system in motion along progressive lines. The superintendent who does not actively educate public opinion as to the work and needs of the schools is unconsciously preparing the way for the overthrow of what he holds most dear."<sup>1</sup>

W. T. Harris stated in 1882:

"The superintendent of schools finds it his most important duty to create and foster an enlightened public opinion in regard to the province and functions of the system of education under his charge . . .

"On the conviction of the people . . . the perfection of the school system depends, and no structure has any stability if its educational results are too complicated or too subtle for popular recognition . . .

"Having as a specialist to conceive an ideal of excellence in his department to perform: he must realize this ideal in the administration of the details of his system, and he must educate popular opinion in his community to appreciate and support that ideal . . . *He must make his educational ideal valid in and through the conviction of the people*, and never allow himself to suppose that he has discharged his duties when he has suggested the educational needs of the people and organized the details of an efficient system to supply those needs.

"It is unfortunate for the cause of education that so many excellent superintendents have neglected . . . this duty, and have even rejected its requirements as unworthy of attention from men with a high sense of honor. They have seen the political demagogue and his base flattery of the passion of the multitude, corrupting them for the sake of perpetuating his own selfish power. An appeal to the

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<sup>1</sup> *Educational Review*, Vol. 16, pp. 519-520, December, 1898.



people—any means used to influence the people directly—seems therefore to be objectionable on the score of demagoguery.

"Holding this view, our able superintendent devotes himself to discovering educational wants and perfecting his work of instruction and discipline, and he haughtily demands the support of the community and expects their confidence as a matter of right and of just due to himself. If the people take a different view and are dissatisfied with his exercise of power, and in the end overthrow his establishment, he assumes the air of a martyr and finds his consolation in enumerating the petty circumstances of his persecution by low-minded enemies, while he was pursuing the strict and narrow path of duty."<sup>2</sup>

J. T. Prince agent of the Massachusetts board of education, had a similar understanding of the problem:

"There is one part of the superintendent's work that has been somewhat neglected in the past—that of educating public sentiment in favor of the public schools; of letting the people know what he is trying to do, so as to get their support and coöperation."<sup>3</sup> He then urged that "public meetings should be held for the purpose of explaining methods of teaching and discipline and for answering any question that may be proposed."

Little was found to indicate that city superintendents did a great amount of this work. This lack of evidence may be due to the fact that when the duties of the superintendent were enumerated, mention of this work generally did not occur, and as a result it was not mentioned in the reports. S. S. Greene gave attention to the matter of public relations when he was superintendent in Springfield. He reported that during his first eight months of service he "met and addressed parents and friends of the schools in twelve different sections on common school education. These lectures in some instances have been well attended; in others but few of the parents have been present."<sup>4</sup> The newspaper

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<sup>2</sup> Harris, W. T., "How to Improve the Qualifications of Teachers." *Education*, Vol. 2, p. 606, July, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> Prince, J. T., "Duties of School Superintendents." *Education*, Vol. 4, p. 412, March, 1884.

<sup>4</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 11-12, 1841.

sometimes carried announcements of these meetings.<sup>5</sup>

The most widespread form of school publicity in the American city was the annual, semiannual, or quarterly report. Of these three forms, the annual report came finally to be that generally accepted. Reports of such a nature were issued in a number of cities, such as Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore, Boston, Springfield, Worcester, Cincinnati, New Haven, and Detroit, a number of years before the superintendency was established.<sup>6</sup> In some of these cities the annual report was one of the instruments most effectively used to bring to the minds of the people the necessity of establishing the superintendency. Usually, after the office had been established, it became the duty of the superintendent to prepare the annual report. Frequently his report would be prefaced by a brief statement by the president of the board of education or by a committee, but in some instances the board participated only by approving the report and ordering its publication. The board usually approved with little comment. Exceptions to this generalization are to be found in the New York case which has been cited<sup>7</sup> and in Cincinnati, where a special committee met with Superintendent E. E. White and aided him in rewriting his report, making it "absolutely free of any matter that might be even construed as being an insult to the board or any of its members."<sup>8</sup>

How the board of education turned over this duty to the superintendent was illustrated in Newark, where the charter required that the board of education prepare a report and where, in compliance with the law, the board of education by resolution ordered that it shall be the duty of the city superintendent "to make out the annual report required by

<sup>5</sup> Springfield, *Republican*, March 27, 1841.

<sup>6</sup> A comparison of the dates of the reports listed in the bibliography, *post*, pp. 306-322, with the dates of the establishment of the superintendency, *ante*, pp. 81-82, shows the years before the superintendency was established during which reports were issued.

<sup>7</sup> *Ante*, pp. 168-170.

<sup>8</sup> Cincinnati, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, May 5, 1890.

law.”<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in Brooklyn the superintendent was required to make the annual report. In Springfield he was required to submit a written report on the condition of the schools, which was to be submitted to the town by the school committee with the committee’s own report, if it was judged best to do so.<sup>10</sup> By the ordinance establishing the public school system of San Francisco the superintendent was required to “make a full report of his official doings and of all the free common schools under his superintendence, to the board of education, once a quarter.”<sup>11</sup> In Seattle, when it was decided to appoint a superintendent, he was required to “report in writing after the close of the school year, or whenever required by the board, giving a statement of the condition and progress of the schools and recommending such measures for their improvement as he may deem advisable.”<sup>12</sup> In New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, in 1845, the superintendent was required to make semiannual reports, giving a “detailed statement of the conditions and prospects of the schools and formulating such plans for their improvement as he may have to impart.”<sup>13</sup>

While the regulations of many other cities might be cited, the reader will get a picture of the widespread employment of the annual report by referring to the Bibliography.<sup>14</sup> This is a fairly inclusive list of annual reports of the cities studied, although in some instances no copies remain of annual reports which were issued. In many instances a part of the annual report was statistical. For example, the superintendent of Memphis, in his annual report, was required to present separately the following facts concerning the white and colored children: whole number of children of school age; whole number of pupils enrolled; per cent of number

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<sup>9</sup> Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 3, 1857.

<sup>10</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, pp. 11-12, 1841.

<sup>11</sup> San Francisco, *Daily Evening Picayune*, September 30, 1851.

<sup>12</sup> Seattle, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 21, 1882.

<sup>13</sup> New Orleans, Municipality No. 2, *Minutes, Board of Education*, February 8, 1845.

<sup>14</sup> *Post*, pp. 306-322.

enrolled of whole number; average number attending; per cent of average attendance of numbers enrolled; average daily attendance; per cent of average daily attendance of average enrollment; total number of days' attendance; total number of days' absence; total number of tardiness marks; per cent of tardiness.<sup>15</sup> The superintendent was required to report also the progress and condition of the city schools and to suggest measures which, in his judgment, would be conducive to their improvement. The superintendent of Providence was required to submit such "plans for the improvement of the schools as he may have to communicate"<sup>16</sup> in his quarterly and annual reports.

Requirements of this type led to discussion by the superintendent of all aspects of the educational service. Methods, finance, teachers, supervision, classification, buildings, course of study, textbooks, truancy, et cetera, all received a share of attention. The superintendent of Detroit, in his first report, stated:

"Here, as elsewhere the people need a larger acquaintance with the details and difficulties of managing a great educational system, since it is by this knowledge alone that they can be brought into full sympathy with public schools, and made hearty coworkers in securing and extending their beneficent results. I shall, therefore, in this report, with your permission, follow what is now almost a universal custom and introduce several topics and suggestions for consideration, not only by the Board of Education, but by the people of the city of Detroit."<sup>17</sup>

The Boston reports of Philbrick took a "wide and methodical range over the whole field of popular education, treating, with a thorough knowledge of the standard authorities, and the ripe fruits of a lifelong experience, whatever concerns the instruction, discipline, or government of the schools. These reports, replete with philosophic thought

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<sup>15</sup> Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of School Visitors*, pp. 39-41, 1875-1876.

<sup>16</sup> Providence, *By-Laws of the School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools*, pp. 10-12, 1846.

<sup>17</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 53, 1863.

and practical suggestions, exhibit the work of many improvements, the success of which has warranted their permanent adoption, as also the failure of various experiments that have been tested and abandoned.”<sup>18</sup> The school committee urged that the reports be studied by all members who wished to discharge their duties to the best of their abilities. Francis Adams, in his report on the school system of the United States, urged the study of the reports of the American cities by English educators in order that they might understand how far behind the United States they were in the development of elementary education.<sup>19</sup> He stated further that the “reports of Mr. Rickoff, the superintendent of the Cleveland schools, would amply repay a careful study by English school officers.”<sup>20</sup>

As the cities became larger, these reports reached a smaller percentage of homes than had been the case at an earlier date. This was unfortunate from the publicity viewpoint, although the reports continued to render a service in this and other ways. Of great importance was the fact that they continued to be freely exchanged, and thereby played a large part in the development of education in many cities.

In a number of cities during the early years of the public school system the newspapers printed the annual report in full; that practice was not long continued, however, as the school system grew and the reports did likewise. Providence is the only city studied in which there were found accounts that it was a duty of the superintendent to secure newspaper publicity. After each quarterly meeting of the committee the superintendent was required to “cause to be published in the newspapers a statement of the number of scholars of each sex in all the schools during the preceding quarter.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Boston, *Report, School Committee*, p. 336, 1874.

<sup>19</sup> Adams, F., *The Free School System of the United States*, p. 247.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>21</sup> Providence, *By-Laws of School Committee and Regulations of the Public Schools*, pp. 10-12, 1846.

In Wilmington the superintendent urged that the public schools put on an exhibit of school work and examinations at the local fair.<sup>22</sup> Many city superintendents were responsible for preparing educational exhibits for the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and for the International Exposition in Vienna in 1873.

Visits were frequently made by the officers of one city to another to study buildings or some other aspect of the educational service.<sup>23</sup> These constituted a type of publicity, but did not do much toward giving the people of a city the desired knowledge of their own school system. To insure the securing of this knowledge it was resolved by the Jersey City board of education, upon motion of the mayor, that the superintendent "devise some systematic plan of school visitation by the board of education in conjunction with the citizens."<sup>24</sup>

Visitation of schools by parents varied widely in different cities and at different times, depending upon a series of factors conducive to such activity. New Haven had much visitation by parents in 1880,<sup>25</sup> while in Springfield at about the same time there was an almost complete neglect of school visitation on the part of parents and friends "owing, perhaps, to the more regular visitation on the part of the school superintendent, yet not for this reason excusable."<sup>26</sup>

Finally, mention must be made of the duty of the superintendent in advising or supplying information to parents or citizens. In Indianapolis he was required "to open an office in some convenient locality where he shall meet at

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<sup>22</sup> Wilmington, *Minutes, Board of Education*, March 24, 1890.

<sup>23</sup> New York, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, Appendix, p. 516, 1867; p. 27, 1874; Richmond, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 30-31, 1871; Baltimore, *Annual Report, Board of Commissioners of Public Schools*, pp. 198-200, 1866; Newark, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 42, 1873; New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 57-58, 1889; Cincinnati, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 19, 1868.

<sup>24</sup> Jersey City, *Minutes, Board of Education*, October 12, 1858.

<sup>25</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 20-21, 1880.

<sup>26</sup> Springfield, *Report, School Committee*, p. 15, 1875.

some specified hour, parents, guardians, and others who may visit and confer with him about matters connected with schools and with difficulties with delinquent or refractory pupils.”<sup>27</sup> In Detroit the superintendent served as a medium of exchange between parents and the board.<sup>28</sup> The superintendent of Jersey City was required to “take cognizance of any difficulty which may have occurred between the instructors and parents or guardians of the pupils, or between the instructors themselves, relative to the government or instruction of the schools, and give advice relative to the same.”<sup>29</sup> The superintendent of Brooklyn reported that among his duties “are the settlement of occasional differences between the teachers, and the harmonizing of altercations between parents and teachers, caused by necessary or excessive discipline, by the refusal of promotions, and by many other sources of discordance. Appeals are constantly made to me by parents for permission to remove children from schools on which attendance has become irksome to others more convenient or less objectionable.”<sup>30</sup>

The superintendent in New Haven was required “to investigate all complaints made to him against scholars and teachers.”<sup>31</sup> Concerning these complaints the superintendent wrote in 1865:

“Nearly all complaints of whatever nature, whether referring to suspensions, to truancies, to punishment, to unsatisfactory progress, to excessive requirements from pupils, are made to the superintendent . . . . There is . . . almost literally no end to the number or variety of these calls upon a superintendent’s time. They begin with his breakfast and follow him to all his meals. These are the hours which many laboring men find most convenient for such business, and it would be unkind and unwise not to listen patiently to their wishes, however, inconvenient the time, or to refer them to his office hours in which it might be less convenient for them to consult him.

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<sup>27</sup> Indianapolis, *Minutes, Board of Trustees*, March 2, 1855.

<sup>28</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 9-12, 1869.

<sup>29</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 105-107, 1876.

<sup>30</sup> Brooklyn, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 4, 1875.

<sup>31</sup> New Haven, *School Regulations, Board of Education*, pp. 9-10, 1862.

There is scarcely a day in the year in which the superintendent is not called upon to attend to cases of misunderstanding or complaint."<sup>32</sup>

A few years later the same superintendent mentioned a duty of his as being to "hear the complaints, meet the exactions, allay the grievances and passions, of no small portion of the parents of those [8,000] pupils."<sup>33</sup> Again he spoke of his public relations as constituted of "calls multitudinous, at all hours of the day, on all days of the week—Sundays not excepted—by parents with requests and grievances; . . . inquiries by persons at home and visitors from abroad, seeking information relating to the schools."<sup>34</sup>

The superintendent of Detroit, in speaking of his duty in explaining to parents why children who are justly entitled to the benefits of the schools could not be admitted on account of an inadequate building program, said: "The office of the superintendent is naturally the place to which parents of applicants unable to gain admission come with their grievances. It is a difficult task to convince men whose taxes build and maintain the schools that there is any justice excluding their children. Month by month the complaints grow louder and deeper."<sup>35</sup> The superintendent of Cleveland wrote concerning these complaints that "there are many adjustments to be made among the somewhat jarring interests of patrons, pupils, and teachers, and the superintendent's office serves in a way as a kind of clearing house for this class of cases. It is a part of his business to stand for the public to the teacher and for the teacher to the public, and in general to keep these mutually harmoniously related, so that the teachers shall be uninterrupted in their proper schoolroom work."<sup>36</sup>

The pressure of the public was perhaps better realized by Boothby, of New Orleans, than by any other superintendent.

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<sup>32</sup> New Haven, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 34-35, 1865.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32, 1873.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38, 1877.

<sup>35</sup> Detroit, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 95, 1877.

<sup>36</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 43-44, 1895.



A pupil of the girls' high school believed that he "must have been disconcerted, to say the least, when on leaving the street car he faced a crowd of more than 500 resolute men, fathers, uncles, brothers, cousins of the girls, who hustled him, with more haste than grace, up the street to the school,"<sup>37</sup> where, when requested to sign a paper to exert himself to prevent a mixture of the races, he replied: "Yes, yes, gentlemen, anything you wish. Just give me a pen."<sup>38</sup> The people had been aroused because he had not attempted to prevent the mixing of the races and had used language regarded as insulting to some of the high school girls. The New Orleans *Bulletin*, characterizing Boothby as "the sanctimonious little dandy ex-tailor who plays the part of superintendent of the city schools," related that he was "grabbed by a number of men, who assaulted him with language more forcible than polite and subjected him to a little shoving and shaking that made his teeth chatter, and caused him to recall some of the catachism which had escaped his memory till then. There was some talk about a rope and some glancing about for a convenient tree, in order to frighten the little fellow. Some of the ladies ran out on the balcony of the school and implored the men not to hurt him. Thereupon Boothby was taken into the school and had to apologize for the affront he had offered yesterday."<sup>39</sup> This having been done, it was discovered that it was not Boothby, but a Republican newspaper reporter, who had done the insulting.

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<sup>37</sup> Harris, T. H., *The Story of Public Education in Louisiana*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> New Orleans, *Bulletin*, December 16, 1874.

## CHAPTER XIV

THE SUPERINTENDENT IN RELATION TO OTHER  
SUPERINTENDENTS AND TO THE PROFESSION

The definition of the duties of the superintendent included, in some cities, a requirement that the superintendent be professionally alert. In Seattle it was his duty to "acquaint himself with the latest and best thoughts on the philosophy and art of teaching."<sup>1</sup> The superintendent of Milwaukee was required "to keep himself and the board constantly informed of the school systems of other countries, states, and cities; their organization and modes of government; the best modes of moral and intellectual education adopted in them; and the general working of their systems; and for this purpose shall effect the best arrangement possible for a regular exchange of reports between this and other school boards."<sup>2</sup> Los Angeles had a similar requirement of the superintendent in order that he might "assist the board to legislate wisely."<sup>3</sup> The superintendent of Memphis was required to keep a book containing the names and addresses of other superintendents and educators with whom he could effect a regular exchange of school documents, in order to become well "acquainted with the program of instruction and discipline in schools in other places."<sup>4</sup>

In fulfillment of these regulations, but not because of the regulations so much as because of the recognition by superintendents of the desirability of sharing, many superintendents were active in the exchange of knowledge. Draper, in commenting upon the energy and vigor manifested in education in the cities, spoke of the city superintendents as forming "a sort of enthusiastic and progressive educational brotherhood; they are in frequent communication, either directly or through educational journals;

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<sup>1</sup> Seattle, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 24-25, 1889.

<sup>2</sup> Milwaukee, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 13-15, 1875.

<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 24-25, 1885.

<sup>4</sup> Memphis, *Annual Report, Board of Visitors*, pp. 97-100, 1865-1866.

they hold conferences at least annually for the discussion of matters involved in their work; and they are quick to seize upon suggestions which give promise of good results. The outcome of this is that in the schools under their supervision there is a very general similarity in the methods and systems employed, and these are ordinarily of proved and acknowledged excellence.”<sup>5</sup>

Not only were there informal round-table meetings of superintendents, but conventions were held in many cities before the superintendency was very old. At a convention in 1844 “challenges were given and accepted by Mr. Mack, city superintendent of Rochester; Mr. Hawley, city superintendent of Buffalo; Mr. Thomas Rensselaar, in behalf of Troy . . . that for improvement in writing and attendance the schools of these several cities would present their comparative claims for rank at the next convention.”<sup>6</sup> The custom of exchanging reports led early to a knowledge of their worthlessness as far as comparative statistics were concerned and prompted superintendents to adopt rules to secure more uniformity in the matter of school membership and statistics dependent thereon.<sup>7</sup>

One of the earliest associations of superintendents that has continued to the present day was the National Association of School Superintendents, which was organized in 1865 at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and held its first meeting in Washington in February of the next year. Nine state and twenty city superintendents were in attendance at this meeting. In 1870 the National Association of School Superintendents became a branch of the National Educational Association and was known as the Department of School Superintendence.<sup>8</sup> In addition to this national organization, there were a number of regional and state associations of

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<sup>5</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 155, 1886-1887.

<sup>6</sup> New York, *District School Journal*, Vol. 5, p. 86, June, 1844.

<sup>7</sup> St. Louis, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 59, 1863 and 1864.

<sup>8</sup> Gardner, W., “History of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association.” *Education*, Vol. 7, pp. 487-488, March, 1887.

superintendents, one of the earliest of which was the New England Association of School Superintendents, organized in the late sixties. Other states having conferences or associations of city superintendents or of city and county superintendents were Virginia, Michigan, Indiana, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, and New York. The majority of these were organized in the seventies or early eighties.

Organizations of their own did not make the superintendents less interested in organizations involving other members of the teaching profession. Among the eleven founders of the National Teachers' Association were J. W. Bulkley, representative of the New York Teachers' Association and superintendent of city schools in Brooklyn, and Zalmon Richards.<sup>9</sup> The first six presidents of the National Teachers' Association were City Superintendents Richards, Rickoff, Bulkley, Philbrick, Wells, and Greene. Before 1890 other city superintendents who served as president of the organization (the name of which was changed in 1870 to the National Educational Association) included Pickard, White, Harris, Hancock, Wilson, Soldan, Gove, and Marble.<sup>10</sup> City superintendents were similarly represented in the other offices of the association. Rickoff welcomed the association to Cincinnati for its first annual meeting. The American Institute of Instruction and the American Association for the Advancement of Education also found city superintendents among their most active members.

Not only were city superintendents active as officers of the professional associations, but they were also large contributors at the meetings. A study of the proceedings of the various meetings cannot fail to impress upon one the fact that city superintendents played a large part in the upbuilding of the profession. They made important contributions to periodical literature, as well as in writing many of

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<sup>9</sup> Richards, Z., "Historical Sketch of the National Educational Association." United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, Vol. 2, pp. 1495-1496, 1893.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1510.

the most valuable professional books of the century. Harris, Philbrick, Greenwood, Pickard, White, Hancock, Randall, Draper, all city superintendents at one time, have made contributions to professional literature that cannot be overlooked by anyone interested in the development of the profession of education in the United States. For example, Randall contributed, in addition to his fifteen valuable reports on the schools of New York City, the following works: *A Digest of the Common School System*, (1844); *The Common School System of the State of New York*, (1851); *History of the Common School System of the State of New York*, (1871); *Mental and Moral Culture*, (1844); *A History of the State of New York* (1870); *First Principles of Popular Education and Popular Instruction*, (1868)<sup>11</sup>

The writings contributed by city superintendents helped to make possible the development of professional courses for the training of teachers and superintendents. Action "directed on the universities to influence them to enter upon the work of organizing the superintendency into a profession"<sup>12</sup> was believed by Adams to be the "immediate need of the hour," when he attacked, in 1880, the existing system of supervision. The city superintendents not only contributed through writing to the solution of this problem, but they also entered university teaching to put it to trial. S. S. Greene, early superintendent of Springfield and later of Providence, in 1851 accepted a professorship in didactics (pedagogy) in Brown University, which he held, together with the superintendency of Providence,<sup>13</sup> until 1855. B. A. Hinsdale and S. T. Dutton were city superintendents who devoted a longer period of their lives to the teaching of pedagogy and whose influence was far more widespread. City superintendents contributed not only indirectly through writing and directly through teaching to the development

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<sup>11</sup> United States Commissioner of Education, *Report*, p. 191, 1881.

<sup>12</sup> Adams, C. F., "Scientific Common School Education," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 61, pp. 935-941, November, 1880.

<sup>13</sup> Providence, *Report, School Committee*, p. 67, 1899-1900.

of professional education, but also through the experimentation which they carried on and the results they achieved. Colonel Francis W. Parker said in substance: "Andrew J. Rickoff is the founder of the new and better method of instruction. I have said that I learned from him what I know of the new education."<sup>14</sup>

Finally mention must be made of the influence of the city superintendent in the state over and above the influence which he exerted as the result of his elevating the profession as a whole through writing, activity in organizations, or university connections. The superintendent of the largest city was, in a real sense, the most outstanding educational officer in some of the states. His salary was larger, his tenure longer and more secure, and his responsibilities far in excess of those exercised by the state superintendent. He was a thoroughly professional employee and not political in the sense that the state superintendent frequently was. These conditions, as well as his leadership in the city, placed him in a strong position to aid in the development of education throughout the state.

Buffalo was the example of a "system of 'free schools the support of which is based upon taxation upon the property of the city,' "<sup>15</sup> which was potent in bringing about such a system throughout New York State. Randall deserved the title "father of the school system of New York," because of his service as deputy state superintendent and because of his continued leadership in the state while city superintendent in New York City. Daniel Leach served Rhode Island as a member of the state board of education while he was superintendent in Providence, and the thanks of the whole state followed him into his retirement.<sup>16</sup> Aaron Gove was "responsible for educational provisions in the Constitution of the new state,"<sup>17</sup> Colorado, which was a territory

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<sup>14</sup> Burns, J. J., *Educational History of Ohio*, p. 437.

<sup>15</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 8, 1848.

<sup>16</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report*, pp. 29-30, 1889.

<sup>17</sup> Smiley, W. H., Letter.

when he took over the superintendency of Denver. The influence of Greenwood could not be confined to Kansas City. Missouri justly looks upon him as an outstanding promoter of education throughout the state, and not alone as a strong city superintendent, for he was active in securing better state educational legislation and conditions.

The challenges confronting the city superintendents of the nineteenth century were new, difficult, and varied. There were enough strong men to accept the responsibility and, as a result, influence the development of education throughout the nation as profoundly as any other group of educators. More credit is due them than has generally been accorded. Although their work was of a different nature, they filled a rôle as important as that played earlier by men of the type of Mann and Barnard. They had to build constructively to bring to fruition the hopes of earlier educational leaders. The educational systems which grew under their guidance spoke more significantly than men could. The tremendous educational advance which they led, in the face of a rapidly increasing population, is among the outstanding educational achievements of the last half of the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER XV

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to present the conditions surrounding and the facts concerning the origin of the city superintendency and the development and expansion of the responsibilities associated with that office. It has included also a consideration of the qualifications of the superintendents, their term of election, tenure in the position, remuneration, and functional responsibilities and interrelationships.

Data concerning these matters are to be found in state legislation, as well as in the minutes of the city council and the school committee or board of education. Much pertinent data were also to be found in the record of such movements as the growth of the city, the establishment of public school systems, the expansion of the educational offering in terms of years and of content offered in any one year, the accumulation of wealth, and other changing social and political conditions.

Greenwood was cognizant of the force of these factors and conditions when he said: "The supervision of a system of city schools is a matter of growth, or of development . . . . Practically no two cities are governed alike, and so far as I have examined the internal workings of city schools, the more I am inclined to view each as a distinct organism."<sup>1</sup>

United States Commissioner of Education Eaton had similar views after directing studies pertaining to city school systems. He stated that in city school systems, "there is such a great variety of aims, purposes, means, and methods indicated in their management that it is difficult to make any satisfactory classification in regard to them."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 32-33, 1889-1890.

<sup>2</sup> Smart, J. H., *Teachers' Institutes*, p. 6, United States Bureau of Education, *Circular of Information*, Number 2, 1885.



The opinions of Greenwood and Eaton concerning city school systems are corroborated in this study. Despite the exchange of reports by cities and the visits of officers of one city to other cities, each city acted in an effort to solve its major problems of education in a manner highly colored by local conditions, practice, and factors of various kinds. This produced great variation in the method of electing a superintendent, in the qualifications demanded of the superintendent, in the relationship of the superintendent to the board of education, and in regard to the rôle of the superintendent in the solution of every educational problem that confronted the city. While the superintendent in one city had responsibility in regard to the selection, appointment, and dismissal of teachers, the superintendent of a neighboring city was without responsibility in regard to teachers except that he was to supervise the teachers given him and make them all excellent. In this endeavor he had no avenue of approach except his personality and excellence, which had to radiate in such a way as to challenge all teachers to attempt to be better teachers. If he failed in this, he failed, for he could do nothing about the selection of teachers, nor could any more forceful means be employed in dealing with them once they were in the system. No change could be effected until public opinion—the education of which is a slow process—demanded a change.

Great variation in practice existed, not only between cities, but also in the same city at different times. In the attempt to meet the issues most successfully many things were done which to-day seem illogical and even absurd. They did not seem so at the time tried, however, for then there was no established way of doing the things in question. Precedents did not exist, for the problems were new ones due to the growth of the cities and the expansion of the educational service. Some cities tried one thing, then another, and the third move was not infrequently to go back to the first method. Empirical experimentation to

discover the best administrative practices proceeded apace in response to the urgency of the needs.

The variety of practices among cities and the shifting or changing of practices within any particular city furnished grounds for the belief, that, concerning many aspects of city school administration, a condition of relative chaos and turmoil existed. In certain aspects this generalization holds, at the end of the nineteenth century, while in others it is valid as applied to an earlier period. The variety of practice, for instance, in the case of the relation of the superintendent to the teachers, was such that one might well ask, "Was there any progress in these things during the nineteenth century?" Cities could be cited where, for example, the superintendent had large responsibility in the selection of teachers in the sixties and where in the same cities in the eighties or nineties local trustees had reassumed the responsibilities formerly belonging to the superintendent.

However, to the question which has been asked a valid answer would be, "Yes, there was progress." But the progress was limited. The foundation of experience was laid, however, for a more rapid progressive development, which was to become evident in the twentieth century. This accumulation of experience became the basis upon which valid hypotheses could be formulated concerning desirable practices.

In addition to the fact that administrative practices of the nineteenth century serve as an excellent illustration of the variety and amount of experimentation essential for social evolution, other conclusions in the form of generalizations will be presented. It should be kept in mind that the variety of practices to which reference has been made is one of the most significant findings of the study, and that consequently there are exceptions to many of the generalizations which follow. An effort has been made to avoid permitting the experiences of the twentieth century to influence the generalizations.

Compared with the latter half of the century, school

administration during the first half was relatively a simple and an unspecialized service. It was carried on directly by the city council, by a committee of the city council, or by a board of education, with varying degrees of independence in many cities. In some instances such bodies were assisted by a secretary, an agent, a treasurer, or a member particularly interested in education and willing to devote much time to seeing to it that the wishes of the board were carried out. The men who rendered such assistance were forerunners of the superintendent. The establishment of the superintendency was brought about because of the growth of the city, the expansion of the educational service, and the inability of the members of the board of education to carry on the work themselves with the desired degree of efficiency. It was opposed because of the expense involved, the lukewarmness or opposition of teachers and principals to the idea, the jealousy with which members of boards of education regarded the executive duties which they exercised, doubt as to where authority to establish rested, the lack of men qualified for such responsibility, et cetera.

The result of the interaction of these forces was the establishment of the superintendency, the time varying widely, depending on the relative strength of the forces in each city. The superintendency was established by the legislature, the city council, or the board of education.

The powers or duties of the first superintendents were very much like those of their forerunners. They were direct executors of the wishes of the board of education or of the will of some of its members. They were not professional educators in the majority of instances; their tenure was short and their salary low. The position was sometimes regarded as of less importance than that of the high school principalship. In the case of a number of cities, the board, irked by the pressure of business details, required the superintendent to attend to the business details as well as to educational matters. Gradually more of the superintendents came to be men who made education their profession. They

were drawn especially from the principalships, and their duties pertained largely to the educational aspects of the work. Thus, as the cities grew, the connection of the superintendent with the business aspect of the service grew less, and he devoted a greater proportion of his time to the educational side of his work .

The superintendent, relieved somewhat of his business duties, became increasingly the specialist and adviser of the board of education in regard to educational matters. No longer was he a mere detail man, as he had been at an earlier date when he was in charge of all phases of administration. A few quotations illustrate the changed view of the superintendent's duties. Superintendent Poland, of Jersey City, wrote: "The superintendent cannot be expected to visit frequently every classroom and thereby become personally familiar with the work of every teacher. The attempt to do this would dissipate his time and attention, which could be more successfully employed in studying the general problems of education at home and elsewhere, shaping the general policy of instruction and discipline in the schools, and putting into operation forces and agencies capable to successfully perform the work for which the schools are maintained."<sup>3</sup> With a similar thought the superintendent of Buffalo, after enumerating a few of his many duties, stated that it was impossible for him to do much more "than to decide upon the shape and general policy of the department. He must rely upon assistants to see that the details are properly carried out."<sup>4</sup>

While boards of education in some cases conferred upon the superintendent rather large powers, particularly in dealing with the teachers and the educational program, and while they carried on business duties themselves or employed another executive for that work, until almost the close of the century they continued to cling tenaciously to administrative work. In cases where a business executive in

<sup>3</sup> Jersey City, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, p. 107, 1888.

<sup>4</sup> Buffalo, *Annual Report, Superintendent of Schools*, p. 34, 1895-1896.

addition to the superintendent was appointed, it was usual for the business executive to report directly to the board of education, since he was of coordinate rank with the superintendent. As the century drew to a close, however, this division of administrative duties among the business manager, school board members, school board committees, and the superintendent brought clearly to view the need for more unity in the responsibility for administration. A considerable number of educators then advocated that the business manager should become the head of the school system, with a superintendent invested with large powers and responsibility only with respect to strictly educational matters.

A review of the data shows that the developments in the nineteenth century left many problems in city school administration awaiting solution. Its contribution in terms of empirical experimentation has greatly reduced, and has given new direction to, the experimentation which will need to be done before a solution to these problems is found. In a subsequent study the writer plans to continue the investigation to ascertain the progress made in the solution of the problems from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present time. Significant progress may be expected if the forward-looking vision of Superintendent Tarbell, of Providence, and Superintendent Hinsdale, of Cleveland, proves to be correct.

In 1885, Superintendent Tarbell, of Providence, wrote:

"I think we ought to expect changes in schools. Schools that are not changing are certainly not improving, though to make no changes is better than to make an unwise one. Schools have not yet adjusted themselves to the powers and processes of the youthful mind, neither have they fully met the demands of society whether present or prospective. The right management of schools is one of the largest of the social problems with which this generation is struggling. A system of schools is not a structure to be torn down and rebuilt like an old house. It is an organism, with its own laws of life and growth, that

has tendencies in this direction and that, here to be pruned and there to be guided, but all the time stimulated and watched over.”<sup>5</sup>

Superintendent Hinsdale, in 1886, stated that upon his arrival in Cleveland many people expected numerous and important changes in organization and methods:

“These advocates of sudden and extreme measures made two great mistakes. First, they failed to see that even in case such changes were called for, no superintendent who came to the schools a stranger could at once or quickly tell what they were or wisely order or recommend them; also that no educator who really had any reputation to lose would risk it on such an experiment. But, secondly, they made a more serious mistake as to the real nature of a school and of a system of schools. Such a school or system is not a framework that can be torn down and put together again according to another model, or even a machine that can be pulled to pieces and built over again; it is rather an organism that has been produced by growth or evolution, more or less alive, more or less fruitful, and that must be handled in harmony with its own nature and laws. What Sir James Mac-Kintosh says of constitutions is true of school systems: ‘They are not made, they grow!’ What the laws of school systems are need not here be made the subject of inquiry; but this is one law of the schools of any city that have existed long enough to call for a fiftieth annual report: All changes, no matter how numerous, how important, or how radical, to be beneficent must be made opportunely and prudently, and must consume time. In the grave words of Bacon, . . . ‘It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of Time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived.’”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Rhode Island, *School Report, Appendix*, p. 80, 1885.

<sup>6</sup> Cleveland, *Annual Report, Board of Education*, pp. 36-37, 1886.

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